The Try, Test and Learn Fund: Carer Achievement Pathway Project Guidelines

Opening date:	5 October 2017
Closing date and time:	2:00PM AEDT on Wednesday 11 October 2017
Commonwealth policy entity:	Department of Social Services
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, please contact:
	Phone: 1800 020 283
	Email: support@communitygrants.gov.au
Date guidelines released:	5 October 2017
Type of grant opportunity:	Restricted non-competitive

Contents

1. Grant opportunity and project overview

1.1 About the grant process

The Try, Test and Learn Fund is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives

This grant opportunity is part of the above grant program which contributes to the Department of Social Services Outcome 1: Social Security. The Department of Social Services works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines*.

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The grant opportunity opens

We publish the grant guidelines and advertise on GrantConnect.

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You complete and submit a grant application

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We assess the grant application

We assess the applications against eligibility criteria and notify you if you are not eligible. We then assess your application against the assessment criteria including an overall consideration of value for money.

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We make grant recommendations

We provide advice to the decision maker on the merits of the application.

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Grant Decisions are made

The decision maker decides if the grant application is successful.

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We notify you of the outcome

We advise you of the outcome of your application.

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We enter into a grant agreement
We will enter into a grant agreement with the successful applicant. The type of grant agreement is based on the nature of the grant and proportional to the risks involved.

<div align="center">⬇</div>

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 program
We evaluate the specific grant activity and program as a whole. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

1.2 Role of the Community Grants Hub

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

1.3 About the grant program

These guidelines contain information about a restricted non-competitive grant opportunity for the Carer Achievement Pathway project. The project was one of those developed during Tranche 1 of the Try, Test and Learn Fund. Information about this and other Try, Test and Learn Fund grant opportunities will be released on the GrantConnect website.

The Try, Test and Learn Fund was announced in the 2016-17 Federal Budget as an initial response to the Australian Priority Investment Approach to Welfare under Outcome 1.10 Working Age Payments. It will develop and fund new or innovative policy responses aimed at improving workforce participation or capacity to work for groups at risk of long-term welfare dependence.

Detailed information about the Try, Test and Learn Fund is publicly available in the Try, Test and Learn Fund Tranche 1 Handbook and the Co-development Supplementary Information document. These documents are available on the Department of Social Services website.

The Try, Test and Learn Fund forms part of Outcome 1.10 Working Age Payments. It will be undertaken according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017 (CGRGs)*.

This document sets out:

- the background and goals of the Try, Test and Learn Fund

- how the Try, Test and Learn Fund works, including information on the public consultation activities that have defined the project to be funded through this grant opportunity (ideas generation and co-development)

- the assessment criteria for the grant opportunity

- how grant applications will be evaluated

- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

You must read this document before completing an application.

1.4 Background to the grant opportunity

1.4.1 Overview

These guidelines relate to the Carer Achievement Pathway project, which is one of the projects to be funded by Tranche 1 of the Try, Test and Learn Fund. Funding for Try, Test and Learn Fund projects will be released in multiple tranches over several years.

Tranche 1 commenced in December 2016 with a public call for ideas. Promising ideas were co-designed with stakeholders and developed into refined project proposals. From these proposals the Minister for Social Services, in consultation with the Prime Minister, Treasurer and the Minister for Finance, selected a number for funding including the project which will be funded through the restricted non-competitive opportunity outlined in these Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

The following sections provide more detail on Tranche 1 and the consultation activities that defined the project being funded.

1.4.2 The Australian Priority Investment Approach to Welfare and the Try, Test and Learn Fund

The Australian Priority Investment Approach to Welfare was a recommendation of the 2015 review of Australia's welfare system, *A New System for Better Employment and Social Outcomes*, led by Patrick McClure. It was established by the Australian Department of Social Services in 2015 and is underpinned by annual actuarial valuations of welfare payment data. The valuations estimate the future lifetime cost of welfare payments to the Australian population and groups within it.

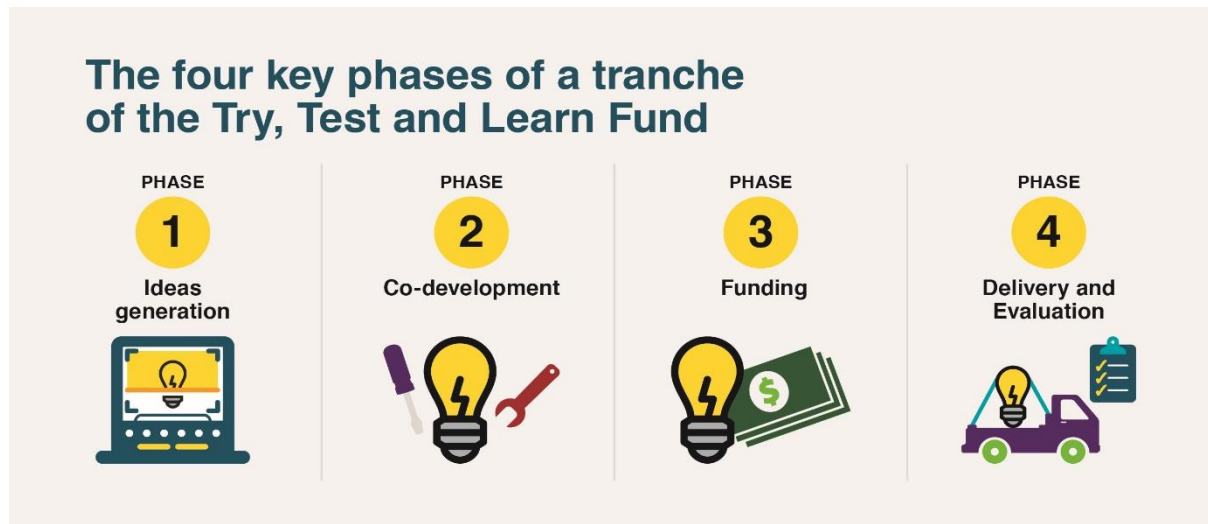The objectives of the Priority Investment Approach are to improve lifetime wellbeing by:

- increasing the capacity of individuals to participate in social and economic life and to live independently of welfare

- reducing the risk of welfare dependence

- reducing long-term social security costs in the interests of maintaining a sustainable support system for vulnerable Australians.

The Try, Test and Learn Fund will support groups identified by the government, based on analysis of Priority Investment Approach valuations, as being at high risk of long-term welfare dependence and whose risk could be reduced with new or innovative policy responses.

Policy responses arising from the Fund are developed through an open and collaborative approach. This approach is focused on seeking new ideas from and collaborating with a diverse range of stakeholders including the social sector, business, academia and the general public in order to develop new ways of tackling complex social challenges.

The Try, Test and Learn Fund entails multiple stages of consultation (see diagram below). It seeks new ideas and then co-designs promising ideas with relevant stakeholders including potential service users. After co-design, selected projects are funded, delivered and evaluated. An overview of each phase as it occurred in Tranche 1 is provided in section 2.2.

The four key phases of a tranche of the Try, Test and Learn Fund

PHASE 1 — Ideas generation
PHASE 2 — Co-development
PHASE 3 — Funding
PHASE 4 — Delivery and Evaluation

The approach to ideas generation and co-development aligns with the principles of robust planning and design, and collaboration and partnership. It ensures that officials can work closely with potential grant recipients and beneficiaries on designing activities that will achieve the outcomes of the Try, Test and Learn Fund in alignment with public needs.

Another central feature of the Try, Test and Learn Fund is the generation of new insights and empirical evidence into 'what works' to reduce long-term welfare dependence. Projects will be robustly evaluated to produce high quality policy evidence regarding whether the interventions are effective, for whom and under what circumstances. In this way, the Fund will allow Government to identify what approaches work and use this evidence to transform our investment in existing programs or make the case for new investments.

1.4.3 Tranche 1 priority groups

The priority groups for Tranche 1 of the Try, Test and Learn Fund were informed by the 2015 Priority Investment Approach Baseline Valuation Report and additional analysis of Priority Investment Approach data. These initial priority groups are:

- young people aged under 25 who started receiving Parenting Payment at age 18 or under and who are still receiving an income support payment

- young people aged under 25 who are in receipt of Carer Payment or at immediate risk of going onto the payment

- young people aged under 25 who have moved, or are at risk of moving, from study (post-secondary or tertiary and been in receipt or receiving a student payment) to an extended period on an unemployment payment.

The initial priority groups were chosen by the Minister of Social Services based on advice provided by the Department of Social Services and the Priority Investment Approach Inter-departmental Committee.

These priority groups are among a number identified in the Priority Investment Approach Baseline Valuation Report as groups of interest who have relatively high lifetime costs but for whom there is potential to reduce these likely costs and improve likely lifetime outcomes.

1.4.4 Tranche 1 project development and selection

The process for the development and selection of Tranche 1 projects entailed:

- **Ideas generation (9 December 2016 to 24 February 2017) –** In the initial ideas generation phase, ideas were broadly sought from community groups, government, academics, business, other groups and the general public through an open forum on the Department of Social Services consultation platform, DSS Engage.

- **Idea shortlisting (late February to March 2017) –** After idea submissions closed, eligible ideas were assessed against the following criteria: effectiveness and impact of the idea; a new or innovative approach; and appropriateness for trial and evaluation. More detail on selection criteria used at the ideas generation stage is available in the Try, Test and Learn Fund Tranche 1 Handbook.[1] Each submission was assessed and moderated before being scored. Senior departmental officials undertook additional research on high scoring ideas before selecting an initial shortlist. Additional ideas that were similar or complementary to key ideas were also selected to include different stakeholders with diverse perspectives and foster a collaborative co-development process.

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[1] DSS Engage

- **Co-development (March to May 2017) –** Shortlisted ideas entered a co-development phase, in which stakeholders collaboratively developed and refined the shortlisted ideas from initial concepts into detailed project proposals. This co-development stage was an important step in seeking new and innovative solutions, and focused on fostering:
  - genuine collaboration with a meaningful impact on program design, including a focus on collaboration with representatives of the priority groups
  - more creative and innovative program design
  - new opportunities for collaboration between the Commonwealth, the community sector, business and other stakeholders, and the chance to learn from each other.

  Co-development involved a series of workshops led by independent design facilitators. In some cases single ideas were workshopped; in others a group of ideas that were complementary or similar were workshopped together. Key co-development stakeholders included proponents of the idea or ideas and potential services users (priority group members). Other stakeholders included members of the Try, Test and Learn Fund Expert Advisory Panel,[2] relevant Commonwealth government representatives and peak body representatives.

  At the end of the co-development phase, design facilitators prepared proposals for each project with some input from co-development participants. More information on the co-development process is available in the Co-development Supplementary Information document.[3]

- **Project recommendation and selection (May to August 2017) –** At the conclusion of the co-development phase, project proposals were considered to determine which projects should proceed to funding and delivery. Each project was considered independently against a range of parameters by the Department of Social Services in consultation with the Priority Investment Approach Inter-departmental Committee.[4] Considerations included how likely the project was to achieve intended outcomes, any major risks or challenges in delivering the project and whether the project had a viable approach for delivery and evaluation. Following these considerations, recommendations were put forward to the Minister for Social Services who made final project selections in consultation with the Prime Minister, the Minister for Finance and the Treasurer.

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[2] The Expert Advisory Panel is a group of academics and research leaders with expertise across various fields including labour market economics, inequality and disadvantage, intergenerational welfare dependency, social research methods and service delivery and implementation. Panel members are called upon for advice to assist with the implementation of the Investment Approach and the Try, Test and Learn Fund.

[3] DSS Engage

[4] Members include the Departments of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Employment, Education and Training, Finance, Health, Human Services, and Social Services; the Treasury; the Australian Bureau of Statistics; and the Australian Government Actuary.

1.4.5 Tranche 1 project funding (August 2017 onwards)

These Grant Opportunity Guidelines cover the Carer Achievement Pathway project for which a restricted non-competitive grant process has been determined to be the appropriate funding approach.

Where a restricted non-competitive grant process has been selected, the original idea proponent is considered to be in a unique position to deliver the project, and has therefore been selected as a sole eligible applicant. In these cases, the idea proponent's idea has been co-developed into a specific project with the Department of Social Services and other stakeholders but retains features which make the idea proponent uniquely qualified as a potential delivery partner. Where idea proponents have not demonstrated specialised expertise or are not in a position to deliver projects, restricted competitive or open competitive grant processes will be pursued.

1.5 Grant opportunity objectives and outcomes

The objective of the Carer Achievement Pathway project is to increase young carers' participation readiness in employment or education, and to support young carers to engage in employment or education, in order to transition away from welfare.

The project will be accessible to all young carers in Western Sydney who are aged under 25 and receiving the Carer payment or Carer Allowance in addition to some other form of income support. It will be particularly useful for those about to transition out of their caring role, as this will provide an opportunity to transition into work or study. The trial will enrol around 360 participants in Western Sydney. Participants will be sourced from referrals from community organisations and support services in the area. When the number reaches 360 the organisation delivering the trial will advise organisations and support services in the area to cease referrals.

The cohort to be supported contributes significantly to the wellbeing of their loved ones and our communities. Due to their caring responsibilities, they are at increased risk of long-term welfare dependence. This risk needs to be addressed in order for young carers to live fulfilled lives and achieve their aspirations. The combination of risk factors that young carers experience includes:

- caring responsibilities that can prevent them from seeking and engaging with traditional employment and educational pathways

- increased likelihood of poor workforce and/or education engagement due to the need to spend time providing care early in life, including reduced likelihood of completing secondary education or being employed

- increased social and economic isolation resulting in reduced awareness of potential pathways out of disadvantage, further entrenching disadvantage

- increased potential for transitioning to other forms of income support even when caring responsibilities cease.

The project is an innovative trial program to assist young carers in western Sydney to plan and build futures beyond their caring roles. It will use coaching, coordinated referrals, peer networking and IT solutions to:

- help young carers to identify and pursue career aspirations through personal development plans

- offer targeted referrals to support services to progress these personal development plans

- provide an online portal for young carers to navigate and access support services, including reviewing appointment records and sharing service reviews with their peers.

This trial project will be delivered in western Sydney where there is a high concentration of socio-economic disadvantage, including inter-generational welfare dependency and significant numbers of young carers. There are two key elements of this project which require very different skills, expertise and capacity to deliver them:

- One is delivering individually tailored services locally to young carers. Consultations with non-government organisations, young carers and independent consultants with expertise in working with young disadvantaged people have emphasised the need for individually tailored services to meet individual needs. They have also reinforced the need for services to be delivered by organisations which understand the local area, including employment, education and other opportunities and how to tap into existing infrastructure and services.

- The other element is to build and test a secure, interactive digital platform for young carers to navigate and access support services such as coaching but also to review appointment records and share service experiences with their peers. The project will build on the services currently offered by the Carer Gateway and test a range of new and different on-line services that will inform any future development of the Carer Gateway. The type of enhancements, for example real time interaction with other young carers or support services, will be developed in consultation with young carers in the development phase of the project. The three month implementation period will focus on identifying in detail what young carers want from a digital platform and building and testing the platform to specifically meet their needs.

The Carer Achievement Pathway project will run for 27 months and entail a three-month implementation phase and a 24-month operational phase. It will be evaluated to assess its success in achieving the specified outcomes and the appropriateness of the approach for a broader rollout. The project will be evaluated against a number of outcomes, including the following:

Short to Medium Term

- an increase in young carers' readiness to participate in education or employment, as evidenced by data such as qualitative reporting from participants and the coordinator

and employment rates and education participation rates and attainment of qualifications

- improved identification and addressing of barriers to participation for young carers, as evidenced by data such as qualitative reporting from participants as well as education or employment rates

- increased engagement with employment or education by young carers, as evidenced by data such as enrolment rates, type and duration of study or employment, and participation rates

- improved levels of social engagement for young carers, as evidenced by data such as qualitative reporting from participants.

Long-term

- sustained and / or progressed education or employment for young carers, as evidenced by data such as enrolment and participation rates and type and duration of study or employment

- sustained or improved levels of social engagement for young carers, as evidenced by data such as qualitative reporting from participants

- reduced reliance on income support by young carers, as evidenced by data such as social security administrative data.

2. Grant amount

The Australian Government has announced a total of $79.6 million to projects supported by the Fund over four years for the Try, Test and Learn Fund. Individual grant amounts will be guided by project design and budgeting conducted during the co-development process and captured in project proposals.

The approximate budget for the Carer Achievement Pathway project is $0.84 million. The Carer Achievement Pathway project will run for 27 months and entail a three-month implementation phase and a 24-month operational phase.

3. Grant eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if it does not satisfy all the eligibility criteria.

3.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible to apply you must be the listed organisation and have received an invitation to apply through GrantConnect.

3.1.1 Eligible applicant

To be eligible you must be the listed organisation:

Name of Organisation	Rationale for Invitation
Carers NSW	See rationale below

Carers NSW is invited to apply for this grant opportunity as they have been assessed to have:

- capability to deliver the project activities in the project location

- existing infrastructure and relationships to support the project activities

- knowledge of and capability to deliver to the project objectives and outcomes

- capability and relationships to integrate a digital platform into the service offering

The development of the Carer Achievement Pathway was based on three eligible ideas which were submitted to Tranche 1, including ideas from the Tranche 1 Policy Hack.[5] The ideas had similar themes and progressed together to the co-development phase in which the project was refined. Co-development involved a design-led approach which focused on the needs of young carers. Stakeholders including peak carer organisations, government agencies and young carers contributed to the development of the project proposal.

The eligible applicant has been invited to submit applications because it has established capabilities, infrastructure and relationships in the designated location necessary to deliver to the project objectives and outcomes in an efficient and effective manner in the selected location. The trial is being run in Western Sydney because there are a high number of young carers in this area, adequate youth or carer specific service providers to provide referrals to the project and access to sufficient potential self-employment and employment opportunities.

This project is a small, time limited, trial project in one location. Western Sydney has also been selected because there is potential for other young carer Try, Test and Learn projects to be trialled in other locations and it is necessary to avoid any potential overlap of projects and participants.

Carers NSW is located in Sydney and works with carers to improve their health, wellbeing, resilience and financial security. Carers NSW has a specific program for young carers and a dedicated Young Carer Team. It also has partnerships with local support services and corporate partnerships with, for example, employers to support carers in paid employment.

Carers NSW has also been closely involved in working on a number of key initiatives and reforms across both Commonwealth and State governments and delivers a range of carer services. Learnings from the Carers Achievement Pathway project will help to inform the development of future initiatives to support carers. Through their extensive experience in this

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[5] More information on the Policy Hack can be found on the Try, Test and Learn Fund and in the Handbook: DSS Engage.

field, Carers NSW will provide the Commonwealth with value for money in delivering this initial trial.

Carers NSW also has a strong background in research and working with recognised institutions and universities to undertake research and development activities.

Carers NSW propose to sub-contract the University of Wollongong (UoW) to deliver the new digital platform. The UoW is well-placed to deliver the platform as it has recently developed and trialled a very successful on-line community based intervention for carers of people with dementia. The ReThink Respite website challenges myths and misconceptions about respite and tells carers what is available and the benefits of respite for themselves and the person living with dementia. The website also provides resources for providers and health professionals. Carers NSW has an existing relationship with the University of Wollongong and through this Carers NSW has expertise in delivering support services via a digital mechanism which ensures value for money for this project.

Carers NSW is a trusted organisation in delivering support services to young carers, especially those at transition points in their lives, enabling them to access appropriate services and prepare for study or employment. Expertise in assessing and understanding the needs of young carers, and then providing targeted support and referrals based on these needs, will be key to the successful delivery of this project. Carers NSW has extensive experience in supporting young carers and existing service footprints that position well to deliver these services to participants quickly and efficiently.

In addition, the eligible applicant has knowledge of the proposed trial location and experience in service delivery in the region. As tailored, wrap-around support for young carers is critical for this activity, the networks and knowledge that the eligible applicant possesses will be integral in achieving project outcomes.

Finally, the project will operate as a trial with constrained financial and time parameters. The most effective method of delivering a trial of this nature is to utilise the skills and knowledge of existing providers. This approach will provide the best value for money for conducting the initial, limited trial stage of the project and to collect policymaking evidence under the auspices of the evaluation-driven policy intent of the Try, Test and Learn Fund. There is no guarantee of continued funding for the successful applicant once the trial is completed. If any decision were made in the future to consider expanding a similar project concept for a broader rollout, broader-based and competitive funding processes would be considered.

4. Eligible grant activities

4.1 What can the grant money be used for?

The grant can be used for the following grant activities:

- staff salaries and on-costs which can be directly attributed to the provision of the grant activity in the identified service area or areas as per the grant agreement

- employee training for paid and unpaid staff including Committee and Board members that is relevant, appropriate and in line with the grant activity

- operating and administration expenses directly related to the project as per the grant agreement, such as:
  - telephones
  - rent and outgoings
  - computer/ IT/website/software
  - insurance
  - utilities
  - postage
  - stationery and printing
  - accounting and auditing
  - travel/accommodation costs
  - assets as defined in the Terms and Conditions of the grant agreement that can be reasonably attributed to meeting agreement deliverables.

- Payments to sub-contractors to perform eligible grant activities.

- Part of the grant can be used for evaluation of the funded project and / or to explore options for future sustainability and ongoing viability of the funded project.

4.2 What can the grant money not be used for?

The grant cannot be used for the following grant activities:

- purchase of land

- major capital expenditure[6]

- subsidy of general ongoing administration costs such as rent, electricity and phone not directly related to the project being delivered as part of the grant agreement

- costs to attend and travel to conferences

- overseas travel

- the covering of retrospective costs.

Please note the grant cannot be used for the costs incurred in the preparation of your grant application or related documentation.

[6] See glossary.

5. The project development and grant selection processes

5.1 Project development

The Carer Achievement Pathway project underwent the Tranche 1 project development process outlined in section 1.3.4. In brief, this project entailed public ideas generation; shortlisting; intensive co-development with a variety of stakeholders including service providers and priority group representatives; and project recommendation and selection.

The Carer Achievement Pathway was developed based on three eligible ideas which were submitted to Tranche 1, including ideas from the Tranche 1 Policy Hack.[7] The ideas had similar themes and progressed together to the co-development phase in which the project was refined. Co-development involved a design-led approach which focused on the needs of service users. Stakeholders including service providers, government agencies and young carers had the opportunity to comment during the development of the project.

5.2 Grant selection process

If an eligible application is received, it will be considered through a restricted non-competitive grant process.

We will assess your application against the criteria set out below. Your application will be considered on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the criteria

- whether it provides value for money.

When undertaking a selection process we will consider the proportionality of scale, nature, funding amount, complexity and risks involved in the funding round. We will consider proportionality to inform the choice of the application and selection process, the type of grant agreement to be used and the reporting and acquittal requirements.

6. The assessment criteria

You will need to address the following assessment criteria in your application. Other criteria, such as innovation, the likely effectiveness of the project and the feasibility of the trial and evaluation of the project have been considered in the idea and project selection stages and do not need to be addressed as part of this grant process.

We will judge your application based on each criterion. The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested. The application form includes word limits.

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[7] More information on the Policy Hack can be found on the Try, Test and Learn Fund and in the Handbook: DSS Engage.

The equally weighted assessment criteria are:

1. Demonstrate your organisation's experience, capability and capacity to manage and deliver services for the young carer target group in the trial location.

   Your response should:

   - demonstrate your organisation's ability to effectively develop, implement, manage and monitor grant activities to achieve positive outcomes for the young carer target group in the trial location

   - demonstrate your organisation's ability to establish effective links with relevant partners and stakeholders to achieve outcomes for the young carer target group.

2. Demonstrate your organisation's experience, capability and capacity to implement and deliver the project and achieve its objectives.

   Your response should:

   - outline the number of key staff that will manage and / or deliver your organisation's project and outline their relevant capabilities (experience, skills and qualifications)

   - demonstrate your organisation's capacity and approach to support data collection and monitoring activities for project evaluation.

7. The grant application process

7.1 Overview of application process

You must read these grant guidelines, the application form, and the grant agreement terms and conditions before you submit an application.

You are responsible for ensuring that your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information will exclude your application from further consideration.

You must address all of the assessment criteria to be considered for a grant. Please complete each section of the application form and make sure that you provide the information we have requested.

Please keep a copy of your application and any supporting papers.

7.2 Application process timing

Submit your application/s by the closing time and date below. If an application is late or the Hub is requested to approve a lodgement after the closing date, the Hub may determine that there were exceptional circumstances beyond the applicant's control resulting in an inability

to meet the stipulated deadline. Examples of exceptional circumstances could include, but may not be limited to:

- Community Grants Hub infrastructure failures

- natural disasters

- power outages affecting the ability of the applicant to submit their application by the deadline

- death or disability of key personnel.

Information on the Community Grants Hub's late application policy is available on the Community Grants Hub website.

The expected start date for the granting activities will be on execution of the Grant Agreement. The expected end date will be subject to individual grant agreements. You must spend the grant by the end date.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Application period	1 week
Assessment of applications	Timing will be dependent on the volume and complexity of applications received and the capacity of the Community Grants Hub and the Expert Panel
Approval of outcomes of selection process	Timing will be dependent on the volume and complexity of applications received and the capacity of the Community Grants Hub and the Expert Panel
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	By the end of November 2017
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	By the end of November 2017
Activity commences	**On execution of the Grant Agreement**
End Date	**Subject to individual grant agreements**

7.3 Completing the grant application

You must submit your grant application using the application form, which is available on the GrantConnect and Community Grants Hub websites. The Application Form can only be accessed by invitees for this grant opportunity. The application form includes help information.

This is an online application form that you must submit electronically. If you have any technical difficulties please contact 1800 020 283 or email support@communitygrants.gov.au.

The Community Grants Hub will not provide application forms or accept applications for this grant opportunity by fax or mail.

You must make sure that your application is complete and accurate and submitted in accordance with these Guidelines.

You cannot change your application after it has been submitted.

7.4 Attachments to the application

The following document must be included with your application:

- project plan completed on the provided template.

Your supporting documentation should be attached to the application form. There will be instructions in the application form to help you. Only attach the documents you have been asked to include.

Please note: There is a 2MB file size limit for each attachment.

7.5 Applications from consortia

Some organisations may apply as a consortium to deliver grant activities. A consortium is two or more businesses which are working together to combine their capabilities when developing and delivering a grant activity.

If you are submitting a grant application on behalf of a consortium, a member organisation or a newly created organisation must be appointed as the 'lead organisation'. Only the lead organisation will enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth and will be responsible for the grant. The lead organisation must complete the application form and identify all other members of the proposed consortium in the application.

7.6 Questions during the application process

Only the invited applicant's questions will be responded to during the application period. To submit a question please call the Community Grants Hub on 1800 020 283 or email support@communitygrants.gov.au. The Community Grants Hub will respond to emailed questions within five working days.

7.7 Further grant opportunities

The Try, Test and Learn Fund will run over four years from 2016-17 to 2019-20. It is anticipated that ideas will be sought, and funding released, over multiple tranches.

8. Assessment of grant applications

8.1 Who will assess applications?

An assessment team will assess all eligible and compliant applications based on their merits. The assessment team will be comprised of departmental staff. The assessment team will undertake training to ensure consistent assessment of all applications.

If the selection process identifies unintentional errors in your application, you may be contacted to correct or explain the information.

An expert panel comprised of policy and delivery staff from the Department of Social Services will then review each application to inform the final recommendations for funding.

The expert panel will make recommendations having regards to:

- overall objectives for the grant activity,

- how the services and/or project will be delivered, and

- value for money.

The expert panel may seek information about you or your application. They may do this from within the Commonwealth, even if the sources are not nominated by you as referees. The expert panel may also consider information about you or your application that is available through the normal course of business.

8.2 Who will approve grants?

The expert panel will make recommendations to the policy delegate (decision maker) who is the Branch Manager, Policy Strategy and Investment Branch. The policy delegate will make the final decision to approve a grant.

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

- the approval of the grant

- the grant funding amount to be awarded

- the terms and conditions of the grant.

The policy delegate must not approve funding if they reasonably consider the program funding available across financial years will not accommodate the funding offer, and / or that the application does not represent value for money.

9. Notification of application outcomes

You will be advised of the outcomes of your application in writing. If you are successful, you will also be advised about any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will notify you in writing.

10. Successful grant applications

10.1 The grant agreement

If you are successful, you must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth represented by the Department of Social Services. Standard terms and conditions for the grant agreement will apply and cannot be changed. A schedule may be used to outline the specific grant requirements. Any additional conditions attached to the grant will be identified in the grant offer or during the grant agreement negotiations.

You will be required to:

- deliver the project and meet the performance reporting and financial acquittal requirements outlined in your grant agreement.

The Department of Social Services will negotiate agreements with the successful applicant.

Where a grantee fails to meet the obligations of the grant agreement, the Department of Social Services may seek to terminate the relevant agreement.

You should not make financial commitments until a grant agreement has been executed by the Commonwealth.

10.2 How the grant will be paid

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 eligible expenditure, you must pay it yourself.

Grant funding will be paid:

- according to agreed milestones and performance indicators defined in the Grant Agreement and Activity Work Plan.

We recognise that unexpected events may affect the progress of a grant activity. In these circumstances, you can request an activity variation, including:

- changing an activity's milestones

- extending the timeframe for completing an activity but within the time period of the Try, Test and Learn Fund program.

The program does not allow for:

- an increase to the agreed amount of grant funds.

If you want to propose changes to the grant agreement, you must put them in writing before the grant agreement end date. Contact your Grant Agreement Manager for further information. We will not consider changes after the grant agreement end date.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on factors such as:

- how it affects the project outcome

- consistency with the program policy objective and any relevant policies of the Department of Social Services

- changes to the timing of grant payments

- availability of program funds.

11. Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website 21 days after the date of effect[8] as required by Section 5.3 of the *CGRGs.*

12. Delivery of grant activities

12.1 Your responsibilities

If successful you must carry out the grant activities in accordance with these guidelines and the grant agreement and activity work plan, which includes standard terms and conditions and any supplementary conditions. The grant agreement will outline specific grant requirements.

You must submit reports in line with the timeframes in the grant agreement. We will provide sample templates for these reports in the grant agreement. We will expect you to report on

- progress against agreed project milestones

- contributions of participants directly related to the project

- eligible expenditure of grant funds.

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[8] See glossary.

You will also be responsible for:

- ensuring that your application is accurate and complete

- ensuring that the terms and conditions of the grant agreement are met and that the activity is managed in an efficient and effective manner

- meeting milestones and other timeframes specified in the grant agreement

- complying with record keeping, reporting and acquittal requirements in accordance with the grant agreement

- participating in grant program evaluation as necessary for the period specified in the grant agreement

- ensuring that the grant activity outputs and outcomes are in accordance with the grant agreement.

12.2 The Department's responsibilities

The Department of Social Services will:

- meet the terms and conditions set out in the grant agreement

- provide timely administration of the grant

- evaluate the grantee's performance.

We will monitor the progress of your project by assessing reports you submit and other agreed performance data and may conduct site visits to confirm details of your reports if necessary. Occasionally we may need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

12.3 Grant payments and GST

Payments will be made as set out in the grant agreement.

Before any payments are made, you must provide:

- a tax invoice for the amount of the payment (the Australian Government's default invoice process is Recipient Created Tax Invoices)

- evidence that you have achieved the associated milestone

- any other conditions of payment (e.g. evidence of purchase of equipment, satisfactory progress report, approvals, and any other documentation).

If you receive a grant, you should consider speaking to a tax advisor about the effect of receiving a grant before you enter into a grant agreement. You can also visit the Australian Taxation Office website for more information.

12.4 Reporting

Carer Achievement Pathway grant recipients must have systems in place to allow them to meet their data collection and reporting obligations outlined in their grant agreement.

Performance information (e.g. client characteristics and service delivery information) will be required to be collected by service providers at the client level and entered directly into the department's client data capture system, its predecessor or via a DSS approved alternative mechanism. Where collection of client level data is not appropriate for instance due to the activity involving a large group, aggregate reporting will be permitted.

Information must be provided in accordance with the Data Exchange Protocols available on the DSS website.

The Department of Social Services new application for performance reporting will:

- be a web based portal

- allow submission of data through external approved third party applications

- support submission of data through other approved methods.

Performance information required to be collected may include (but is not limited to):

- client identity characteristics

- client demographic characteristics

- service delivery information

- client outcomes.

12.5 Evaluation

The Department of Social Services will evaluate the Try, Test and Learn Fund and each project funded by it to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. Your grant agreement requires you to provide information to help with this evaluation.

12.6 Acknowledgement

All materials related to grants under the program must acknowledge the Commonwealth as follows:

'Try, Test and Learn Fund – an Australian Government initiative.'

12.7 Probity

The Australian Government will make sure that the program 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.

Note: These guidelines may be changed from time-to-time by Department of Social Services. When this happens the revised guidelines will be published on GrantConnect.

12.8 Complaints process

The Department of Social Services Complaints Procedures apply to complaints about the Program. All complaints about a grant process must be lodged in writing.

Any questions you have about grant decisions for the Program should be sent to support@communitygrants.gov.au.

The applicant can contact the complaints service with complaints about Community Grants Hub's service(s) or the application process.

Details of what constitutes an eligible complaint can be provided upon request by the Community Grants Hub. The applicant can lodge complaints through the following channels:

Telephone: 1800 634 035

Fax: (02) 6204 4587

Mail: DSS Complaints

                      PO Box 9820

                      Canberra Business Centre ACT 2610

If an Applicant is at any time dissatisfied with Department of Social Services/ the Community Grant Hub's handling of a complaint, they can contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman by:

Mail: Commonwealth Ombudsman

                      GPO Box 442

                      Canberra ACT 2601

The applicant can also lodge a complaint about the Department of Social Services / Community Grants Hub using the complaints form on the Commonwealth Ombudsman website at the complaints page.

Alternatively, a complaint can be made over the phone on 1300 362 072.

12.9 Conflict of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if a Community Grants Hub staff member, 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,

- has a relationship with an organisation, or in an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently or

- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives funding under the Program.

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 identify that there is an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest or that one might arise in relation to a grant application, you must inform the Community Grants Hub in writing immediately. Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

The chair of the expert panel will be made aware of any conflicts of interest and will handle them as set out in Australian Government policies and procedures. 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*. We publish our conflict of interest policy available on the Community Grants Hub website.

12.10 Privacy: confidentiality and protection of personal information

We treat your personal information according to the 13 Australian Privacy Principles and the *Privacy Act 1988*. This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect

- why we collect your personal information

- who we give your personal information to.

You are required, as part of your application, to declare your ability to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988,* including the Australian Privacy Principles, and to impose the same privacy obligations on any subcontractors you engage to assist with the grant activity. You must ask for the Australian Government's consent in writing before disclosing confidential information.

Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else if you are given reasonable notice of the disclosure; where disclosure is authorised or required by law or is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law; if it will prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to a person's life or health; or if you have consented to the disclosure.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information about grant applicants and grant recipients under the Program in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

We may reveal confidential information to:

- the committee and other 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.

We may share the information you give us with other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes including government administration, research or service delivery and according to Australian laws, including the:

- *Public Service Act 1999*

- *Public Service Regulations 1999*

- *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act*

- *Privacy Act 1988*

- *Crimes Act 1914*

- *Criminal Code Act 1995*.

We'll treat the information you give us as sensitive and therefore confidential if it meets all of the four 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

4. you provide the information with an understanding that it will stay confidential.

The grant agreement will include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the grant agreement.

12.11 Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about the Program, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (FOI Act).*

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

By mail: Freedom of Information Coordinator
             The Department of Social Services
             Public Law Branch
             GPO Box 9820
             Canberra ACT 2601

By email: foi@dss.gov.au

12.12 Consultation

For information about the co-development process used to refine and develop shortlisted ideas, please see the 'Important Information' section of the Try, Test and Learn Fund DSS Engage website.

13.Glossary

Term	Definition
Assessment criteria	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 granting activity, to determine applicant rankings. (as defined in the CGRGs)
Capital expenditure	Capital expenditure is spending for capital items as defined in the Department's Capital Works Policy. A capital item is any item of real estate or infrastructure valued at $10,000 or more (including GST). Capital items include, but are not limited to: • land • new and existing buildings, including demountable buildings that are a fixture to the land • building renovations • roads, pipelines and airstrips.
Co-development	The co-development phase involves consultation with stakeholders to collaboratively develop and refine shortlisted ideas from initial concepts into detailed project proposals.
Commencement date	The expected start date for the grant activity.
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*.
Completion date	The expected date that the grant activity must be completed and the grant spent by.
Cost shifting	Involves 'substitution of effort' by the Commonwealth for activities of another organisation or level of government. For example, cost shifting occurs where the Commonwealth provides a grant for an activity that would usually be paid for by a state, territory, or local government, such as municipal services (as defined in the CGRGs).

Term	Definition
Date of effect	This will depend on the particular grant. It can be the date in which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date. Where there is no grant agreement, entities must publish information on individual grants as soon as practicable (as defined in the CGRGs).
Decision maker	The person who makes a decision to award a grant.
Double dipping	Double dipping occurs where a grant recipient is able to obtain a grant for the same project or activity from more than one source (as defined in the CGRGs).
Eligibility criteria	The principles, standards or rules that a grant applicant must meet to qualify for consideration of a grant. Eligibility criteria may apply in addition to assessment criteria (as defined in the CGRGs).
Grant	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 or other CRF money, is to be paid to a recipient other than the Commonwealth; and b) which is intended to assist the recipient achieve its goals; and c) which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy objectives; and under which the recipient may be required to act in accordance with specified terms or conditions (as defined in the CGRGs section 2.3).
Grant activity	The project / tasks / services that the grantee is required to undertake with the grant money. It is described in the Grant Agreement

Term	Definition
Grant agreement	Grant agreement means the contract template used by Australian Government entities to set out the mutual obligations relating to the provision of the grant. The Australian Government is standardising and streamlining grant agreements between the Commonwealth and grant recipients to allow grant recipients to engage more easily and efficiently with the Commonwealth (as defined in the CGRGs).
Grant Agreement Manager	Monitors performance against agreed objectives within grant agreements and ensure accountability requirements are met.
Grant opportunity	A notice published on GrantConnect advertising the availability of Commonwealth grants.
Grant program	May be advertised within the 'Forecast Opportunity' (FO) section of GrantConnect to provide a consolidated view of associated grant opportunities and provide strategic context for specific grant opportunities.
Grantee	An individual / organisation that has been awarded a grant.
Selection criteria	Comprise eligibility criteria and assessment criteria (as defined in the CGRGs).
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 (as defined in the CGRGs).