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Australia's Disability Strategy – National Disability Conference Initiative

Feedback for applicants

Overview

The National Disability Conference Initiative (NDCI) is a program delivered by the Australian Government as a commitment under Australia's Disability Strategy, supporting the vision of the strategy for an inclusive Australian society that ensures people with disability can fulfil their potential, as equal members of the community.

The NDCI is part of the department's Disability and Carer Support component, under the Disability and Carers program (the program). The program provides community-based initiatives and support for people with disability and for carers so they can develop their capabilities and actively participate in community and economic life.

The objectives of the program are to provide a foundation for integrated, community led program delivery that understands and meets local needs and promotes innovation and collaboration.

This grant opportunity provides grants to conference organisers to assist people with disability participate in nationally-focused, disability-related, conferences held in Australia. Grants will support eligible conference organisers to provide accessibility measures that will maximise the inclusion and participation of people with disability at their conference. This in turn supports the achievements of Australia's Disability Strategy.

The outcomes of the NDCI that are expected to be achieved by this grant funding round are:

- greater awareness of *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031* launched on 3 December 2021
- people with disability are provided with greater opportunities to participate in all areas of Australian life by assisting them and their carers with the costs of participating in disability related conferences that might otherwise be inaccessible to them
- greater participation and inclusion of people with disability at nationally-focused, disability-related conferences held in Australia.

Up to \$315,000 (GST exclusive) over one year is available for this grant opportunity, starting from 1 July 2022 and ceasing 30 June 2023.

The application period opened on 4 January 2022 and closed on 1 February 2022. Applicants could apply for up to a maximum of \$10,000 (GST exclusive) in funding over the funding period. Successful organisations may have received less funding than requested.



This feedback is provided to help grant applicants understand what made a strong application for this grant round, and how to strengthen future applications.

Selection Process

An open competitive selection process was used, allowing a range of organisations that meet the eligibility criteria to apply.

Applications were first screened for eligibility and compliance against the requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

All eligible and compliant applications were then assessed against the 3 equally weighted assessment criteria. Information on what made a strong response to each criteria is provided below.

Following assessment, a Selection Advisory Panel (the panel) with a mix of relevant policy, program and delivery expertise from the Department of Social Services made final funding recommendations.

A total of 65 applications were assessed, making the selection of successful grant recipients competitive.

The panel recommended applicants based on the strength of their responses to the selection criteria and their ability to meet the grant requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. Specifically, the panel recommended applicants that best:

- aligned their activities with the objectives of the grant
- represented value for money
- demonstrated experience and expertise to administer the grant funding.

The panel recommended 33 organisations to the delegate for funding. The delegate made the final decision to approve the grant, including the grant funding amount to be awarded.

The following feedback outlines how individual responses to specific assessment criteria could have been strengthened.



Criterion 1 – National disability focus

When addressing this criterion strong applicants will:

- demonstrate how your conference aligns with one or more of the outcome areas of *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031*.
- describe the overall benefit of the conference to the relevant target group
- demonstrate how the conference has a national focus.

Strength	Example
<p>Strong applications clearly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ demonstrated how the conference aligned with one or more of the outcome areas of <i>Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031</i>▪ described the overall benefit of the conference to the relevant target group▪ how the conference has a national focus.	<p>Strong responses clearly described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ how the conference supports the aims of Australia's Disability Strategy by referencing specific outcome areas of the Strategy and explaining how the conference would promote those outcome areas▪ the benefits the conference will provide to the target group, for example:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– provide an opportunity for people with disability to obtain knowledge of, and to be able to share, the latest information/research relevant to the target group– provide an opportunity for people with disability to contribute to policy development– connect people with disability sharing a similar experience, build relationships and so on– live streaming conference content to be available to people with disability unable to attend in person.▪ how the conference has a national focus – for example:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– demonstrating how the content of the conference focuses on national issues– strategy to ensure people with disability from around Australia have the opportunity to participate– how a virtual conference will be made available to people with disability around Australia.



Criterion 2 – Maximising the inclusion and participation of people with disability

When addressing this criterion strong applicants will:

- demonstrate how assistance will maximise the inclusion and participation of people with disability at the conference
- provide an expected budget of expenditure items the grant money will be used for.

Strength	Example
<p>Strong applications clearly demonstrated the specific ways grant funds will be used (and the expected itemised budget) to maximise the inclusion and participation of people with disability at the conference.</p>	<p>Strong responses clearly described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ specific ways grant funds will be used for eligible items/activities, for example:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– assist people with disability and their carers with costs associated with travel, accommodation, live captioning, accessible materials, technology enhancements so people with disability can participate remotely, and so on▪ the number of people with disability expected to attend the conference as opposed to the number of clinicians, researchers and providers, and so on▪ the anticipated number of people with disability to be assisted through the grant funding▪ details of expected costs of each item/activity for which the grant funding will be used (that is, expected itemised budget).



Criterion 3 – Organisation capacity and capability

When addressing this criterion strong applicants will:

- demonstrate your organisation’s capacity and capability to administer the grant
- demonstrate the relevant experience, skills and qualifications of members of your organisation in delivering the project.

Strength	Example
Strong applications clearly demonstrated their organisation’s experience in administering grants or programs and their staff’s skills and experience to deliver the conference.	Strong responses clearly described: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ the organisation’s experience in managing grants, programs or similar conferences by detailing recent examples of the type of activities delivered and how the contractual requirements were successfully handled▪ relevant skills and qualifications of individuals who have a key role in organising the conference.