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# National Disability Strategy – National Disability Conference Initiative

Feedback for applicants

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## Overview

The National Disability Conference Initiative (NDCI) is a program delivered by the Australian Government as a commitment under the National Disability Strategy (the Strategy), supporting the vision of the Strategy for inclusive and accessible communities.

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

The NDCI has 2 discrete grant activity streams to be conducted concurrently in 2021–22:

### Activity Stream 1: Disability Conference Activity (DCA)

This activity stream provides grants to **disability conference organisers** to help 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 the outcomes of the Strategy.

### Activity Stream 2: Mainstream Conference Inclusion Activity (MCIA)

This activity stream will fund activities that influence and increase the level of disability-related content in mainstream conferences by providing grants to **disability organisations to collaborate with mainstream conference organisers** to integrate content and issues relevant to people with disability into mainstream conferences, and/or to improve accessibility and facilitate inclusion of people with disability in mainstream conferences.

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This approach will be relevant to a broad range of conference types (for example, sport/recreation, tourism, arts, environment, information technology, employment, education, housing, transport) that are expected to contain content that aligns with the outcome areas in the Strategy.

Under Activity Stream 2, only organisations that meet the definition of Disabled Peoples Organisations or Families Organisations (DPO/FOs) are eligible to apply.

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

- people with disability are provided with greater opportunities to participate in all areas of Australian life by assisting them and their carers to participate in and influence disability-related and mainstream conferences that might otherwise be inaccessible to them
- a raised awareness among organisations/service providers participating in mainstream conferences of how their activities can benefit from being more inclusive of people with disability.

Up to \$630,000 (GST exclusive) over one year is available for this grant opportunity, starting from 1 July 2021 and ceasing 30 June 2022. For this grant opportunity, a total of \$315,000 (GST exclusive) will be available for Activity Stream 1 – DCA. A total of \$315,000 (GST exclusive) will be available for Activity Stream 2 – MCIA.

The application period opened on 1 December 2020 and closed on 20 January 2021. 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 made final funding recommendations.

A total of 70 applications across both streams were received, making the selection of successful grant recipients competitive.



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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.



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## Stream 1 - DCA

### Criterion 1

Describe the overall benefit to the relevant target group and how the conference supports the aims of the National Disability Strategy.

Strength	Example
<p><b>Strong applications clearly demonstrated the overall benefit to the relevant target group and how the conference supports the aims of the National Disability Strategy</b></p>	<p>Strong responses clearly described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ the benefits the conference will provide to the target group, for example:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– providing 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</li><li>– connecting people with disability/families sharing a similar experience, build relationships etc.</li><li>– live streaming conference content to be available to people with disability/families unable to attend in person</li></ul></li><li>▪ how the conference supports the aims of the National Disability Strategy by referencing specific outcome areas of the Strategy and explaining how the conference would promote those outcome areas.</li></ul>



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## Criterion 2

Detail the specific ways grant funds will be used (and the expected budget) to maximise the inclusion and participation of people with disability at the conference.

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

## Criterion 3

Demonstrate your organisation's experience in administering grants and your staff's skills and experience to deliver the conference.

Strength	Example
<p><b>Strong applications clearly demonstrated their organisation's experience in administering grants and their staff's skills and experience to deliver the conference</b></p>	<p>Strong responses clearly described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ the organisation's experience in managing grants by detailing the type of grants delivered and how the contractual requirements were successfully handled</li><li>▪ relevant skills and qualifications of individuals who have a key role in organising the conference.</li></ul>



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## Stream 2 – MCIA

### Criterion 1

Provide details of the collaboration arrangements with the mainstream conference organiser, including describing the specific ways grant funds will be used (and the expected budget) to increase the conference’s focus on people with disability.

Strength	Example
<b>Strong applications clearly demonstrated collaboration arrangements with the mainstream conference organiser, including describing the specific ways grant funds will be used to increase the conference’s focus on people with disability</b>	Strong responses clearly described: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ details of collaboration arrangements with the mainstream conference organiser including the name and date of the conference</li><li>▪ specific ways grant funds will be used for example, implementing disability issues sessions, providing keynote address, ensuring the conference is inclusive/accessible to people with disability, providing technology enhancements so people with disability can participate remotely</li><li>▪ details of expected costs of each item/activity for which the grant funding will be used (i.e. expected budget).</li></ul>

### Criterion 2

Describe how this approach will benefit people with disability and/or raise awareness with organisations/service providers participating in the mainstream conference of how their activities can support the Outcome Areas of the National Disability Strategy.

Strength	Example
<b>Strong applications clearly demonstrated how the approach will benefit people with disability and/or raise awareness with organisations/service providers participating in the mainstream conference of how their activities can support the Outcome Areas of the National Disability Strategy</b>	Strong responses clearly described: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ how the approach will benefit people with disability and/or raise awareness with organisations/service providers participating in the mainstream conference of how their activities can support the Outcome Areas of the National Disability Strategy</li><li>▪ which Outcome Areas of the National Disability Strategy their activities will address.</li></ul>



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### Criterion 3

Demonstrate your organisation's capability to administer the funding.

Strength	Example
<b>Strong applications clearly demonstrated the organisation's capability to administer the funding</b>	Strong responses clearly described: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>the organisation's experience in administering grants including recent examples and outcomes of other grants the organisation has administered.</li></ul>