



Feedback for Applicants

Community-led Projects to Prevent Violence against Women and their Children

Overview

On 9 August 2019, the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the Fourth Action Plan of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022* (the National Plan). The Australian Government committed \$340 million to the Fourth Action Plan, to prevent violence before it happens and provide support to women and children.

This included funding of \$6.139 million GST exclusive across three financial years (2019–20 to 2021–22) for the Community-led Projects to Prevent Violence against Women and their Children grant opportunity. The aim of this opportunity is for organisations to develop and deliver community led primary prevention activities that challenge violence-supportive attitudes and behaviours. A community-led approach ensures the people, groups and communities impacted by a project are actively involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of the project.

Priority cohorts for this grant opportunity, as identified through Fourth Action Plan Consultations included:

- Children and young people
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Women with disabilities
- Women living in rural and remote communities
- Culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- People with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.

The Department of Social Services (DSS) sought applications from specialist organisations, or consortium partnerships led by specialist organisations via an open competitive grant opportunity. For the purposes of this grant opportunity, a specialist organisation required expertise in family, domestic or sexual violence, gender equality or primary prevention.

The application period opened on 13 August 2019 and closed at 11.00PM AEDT on 9 October 2019. Activities are expected to commence in February 2020 and end in June 2022.

The feedback provided below is to help applicants understand the selection process for this grant opportunity, and how to strengthen future applications. In line with the Grant Opportunity Guidelines individual feedback will not be made available.

Selection Process

316 applications were received making the selection of successful grant recipients highly competitive, given the stated intention to fund between 12 to 17 organisations.

Initial screening determined 309 applications were eligible and compliant with the requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. These applications were assessed against six equally weighted assessment criteria. Of the 309 applications:

- 153 fully met the selection criteria
- 131 partially met the selection criteria
- 25 did not meet any of the selection criteria.

A DSS Selection Advisory Panel, with a mix of relevant policy, program and delivery expertise, then considered all applications and their assessment results and made funding recommendations on applications having regard to:

- whether the project, and its elements, aligned with the program objectives
- value for money
- conformance with Grant Opportunity Guideline eligibility criteria
- service provider mix (location and cohort)
- how the services and/or project will be delivered.

DSS established an Expert Advisory Group to provide supplementary advice to the Selection Advisory Panel on suitability, value for money, sector specific knowledge, service delivery expertise regarding priority cohorts, primary prevention, sexual assault and domestic and family violence.

The Selection Advisory Panel and the Expert Advisory Group acknowledged the high level of commitment to primary prevention across the sector, as evidenced by the large number of applications. The applications were generally of high quality, reflecting the efforts made by applicants to comprehensively address the assessment criteria. The SAP and EAG members prioritised projects which:

- were innovative and would add to the knowledge base about successful strategies to reduce violence
- demonstrated a high level of engagement with identified priority cohorts and/or identified community
- were located in geographic regions where there were relatively few existing services or programs.

After assessment, 14 applications were selected for funding, totalling \$ 6,524,787 million (GST exclusive). The DSS Delegate, the Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities, approved funding to the successful grant recipients.

The successful applicants proposed activities that were eligible, appropriate and considered effective for achieving the program objectives. They demonstrated their suitability for public funding, value for money and met all of the eligibility requirements in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

General feedback

Applicants could have generally strengthened their application by:

- ensuring they thoroughly read the Grant Opportunity Guidelines
- ensuring all aspects of the criteria, including sub-criteria were addressed
- demonstrating their consideration of the grant program's objectives
- including relevant information that is supported by reliable and current evidence.

The table below provides further information about stronger and weaker responses.

Topic	Stronger responses	Weaker responses
Alignment with Grant Opportunity Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding was within the funding range of \$350,000–\$550,000 for this grant opportunity. Projects are innovative and/or complement and expand on existing effective projects, frameworks and campaigns. Activities were primary prevention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding amount was outside the funding range. Funding was for an existing program with no expansion. Activities were not primary prevention – e.g. advocacy, legal services, emergency accommodation and individual victim counselling.
Organisation expertise and capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong evidence of track record in delivering quality outcomes, including details of previous programs and evidence of their success. Suitably qualified and experienced staff. Well-developed governance proposal. Disclosure management (including mandatory reporting) and trauma-informed, culturally appropriate practices are detailed. Preference was given to applications that demonstrated existing strong relationships with their target groups or communities, or partnerships with organisations representing those groups or communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant (or lead applicant) did not provide evidence to support the claim of being a specialist organisation with expertise in family/domestic/sexual violence, gender equality or primary prevention. Unclear consortia arrangements including the roles, responsibilities and decision making processes.
Gendered drivers of violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong recognition and analysis of gendered drivers of domestic and family violence. Activities align with existing primary prevention frameworks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender inequality was not recognised as the driver of family and domestic violence. Program/activities focused on factors that reinforce violence (such as socio-economic inequality and discrimination) rather than drivers of domestic and family violence.
Community needs and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong recent evidence to demonstrate the need for the program/activity. Clearly articulated how the community would be engaged in the development, implementation and evaluation of the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community was involved in consultation for program development, but not in the implementation and evaluation of the program. Priority cohorts were selected in the application but not discussed in responses to the selection criteria.

Topic	Stronger responses	Weaker responses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation provides evidence to demonstrate the intersecting forms of marginalisation and disadvantage for the target community. • Project clearly targets a community and is tailored to suit their needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intersecting forms of marginalisation and disadvantage were discussed but supporting evidence was not referenced.
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project plan was well developed, including timeframes, key deliverables, budgeting and evaluation plans. • The participant numbers and indirect reach was estimated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient detail was provided on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • management and identification of key risks • timeframes and key deliverables • evaluation planning • project reach.