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# Family Law Services – Children’s Contact Service – Additional Services

## Feedback for applicants

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The Attorney-General’s Department has provided the following General Feedback for applicants of the Family Law Services – Children’s Contact Service – Additional Services grant opportunity.

### Overview

Family Law Services are the policy responsibility of the Attorney-General’s Department funded from the Family Relationship Services Program (FRSP). The objective of the FRSP is to improve the wellbeing of Australian families, particularly families with children who are at risk of separating or have separated. The FRSP has a number of Family Law Service activities, including Children’s Contact Services (CCS), to which this grant opportunity relates.

This grant opportunity was for the provision of funding to organisations to deliver up to 20 new CCSs in selected Statistical Area Level 4 regions. Services to be established via this opportunity will be in addition to the 64 CCSs which currently receive funding.

The legal basis for the Commonwealth Government to provide funding for this activity under the FRSP is section 32B of the *Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers) Act 1997* and schedules 1AA, and 1AB item number 185 of the *Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers) Regulations 1997*.

The objectives of the grant opportunity are to deliver a CCS which:

- provides a trauma-informed child-centred model of intervention which assists children of separated parents establish and maintain a relationship with their other parent and family members
- helps achieve sustained and workable long-term parenting and contact arrangements.

The intended outcomes of this grant opportunity are to deliver a CCS which:

- provides a safe, reliable and neutral place to assist parents with the change-over of children
  - provides supervised visits to assist separated parents manage contact arrangements, especially where there are concerns about safety
  - ensures the best interests of the child are kept at the centre of the contact process, including through the effective management of safety concerns.
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The grant opportunity application period opened on 11 March 2022 and closed on 12 April 2022.

The grant opportunity received applications from 80 organisations. The Attorney-General, as the Decision Maker, has approved funding to 15 organisations for the establishment of 20 new services (in the 20 SA4s selected for this grant opportunity) to a value of \$40.7 million (GST exclusive).

There was strong interest in the opportunity and successful applications were of a very high standard. Applications were assessed according to the procedure detailed in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines and outlined in the selection process below.

This feedback is provided to assist grant applicants to understand what generally comprised a strong application and the content of quality responses to the assessment criteria for this grant opportunity.

## Selection process

The Community Grants Hub screened applications for eligibility and compliance against the eligibility criteria outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. The Attorney-General's Department determined if applications would proceed to further assessment (taking into account the outcomes of the screening process). Applications that did not progress to further assessment were notified of the outcome. The Attorney-General's Department then considered eligible and compliant applications as part of the open competitive grant assessment.

Applications were assessed on merit, based on:

- how well it met the criteria
- how it compared to other applications
- whether it provided value with relevant money

Each applicant was required to address the following selection criteria:

1. Describe how you will deliver the CCS in accordance with these Grant Opportunity Guidelines.
2. Outline where in the relevant SA4 2016 regions listed in section 5.2 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines will the CCS be located, and why the location/s has been chosen.
3. Demonstrate how many clients it is anticipated the CCS will service.

Each of the above criteria had sub-criteria.

Preferred applicants were identified based on the strength of their responses to the selection criterion and their demonstrated ability to meet the grant requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.



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## Selection results

Fifteen organisations were selected to deliver the Children’s Contact Service – Additional Services grant, establishing 20 new services across Australia.

The selected organisations provided strong responses to the selection criteria and demonstrated their ability to meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. Successful applicants provided persuasive arguments and demonstrated the estimated demand or need for a CCS in the selected location. The activities proposed were in scope and suitable for a funded CCS. The service delivery model was inclusive and the applicant provided evidence of being able to deliver a suitable CCS.

Further detail about what constituted a strong response to each criterion is provided below.

### Criterion 1

Describe how you will deliver the CCS in accordance with these Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

When addressing the criterion, strong applicants will:

1. describe the services you will provide, including an outline of the service delivery model that your organisation will use to deliver the activity
2. describe what review processes you will put in place to ensure your service delivery aligns with the intended outcomes of the grant opportunity
3. provide details of your organisation’s relationship and referral pathways with other support services that will enable maximum outcomes for your clients and attach supporting evidence where relevant.

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**Strong responses described:**

- their capacity for delivering a CCS and proposed activities which were in scope for this opportunity
- the services they would provide to their clients and how they could be delivered in a safe and appropriate manner for both the children and their parents/carers
- the child-focussed and inclusive nature of their service and proposed service delivery method, including their capacity to deliver culturally appropriate service to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- the ability to work with clients presenting with differing levels of risk
- risk assessment and intake procedures
- the process by which routine case reviews would be conducted, with consideration to the appropriate frequency, issues to be covered and the possible outcomes from the review process
- the safety and security measures which would be used in the service
- collection of other data specifically designed to help measure client outcomes as required under the 'partnership approach'.

**Criterion 2**

Outline where in the relevant SA4 2016 regions listed in section 5.2 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines will the CCS be located, and why the location/s has been chosen.

When addressing the criterion, strong applicants will:

1. provide evidence as to why the location selected within the relevant SA4 regions is the best location for the service (for example, service or transport hubs, co-located organisations).

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**Strong responses described:**

- why the nominated location was selected
- the consideration given to servicing the SA4 as a whole and not limiting the service provision to the selected location
- statistical and socioeconomic data (underlining key aspects as to why they chose the area, including demand for the service, barriers to accessing services, rate of separation and domestic violence)
- in detail, the variety of publicly available wraparound services that clients can access (additional support, family counselling, mental health support and so on) in the area
- accessibility of public transport
- the availability of suitable premises in the selected location including details about the facilities, safety and security measures for workers and clients, premises that are child-friendly and equipped with suitable play spaces for children and families
- their connections with the local community and understanding of the needs of those in the area.

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### **Criterion 3**

Demonstrate how many clients it is anticipated the CCS will service.

When addressing the criterion, strong applicants will:

1. include information on demographics of the expected client base
2. provide details of your organisation's relationship with organisations that represent or provide support services to these client groups and attach supporting evidence where relevant (for example, MOUs with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations).

#### **Strong responses demonstrated/described:**

- a clear and well justified quantification of the anticipated service delivery capability either through numbers of clients, hours of contact to be provided or substantial operating hours
- demographic information on the expected client base, such as education, income, age, number of children, ethnicity and an understanding of the impact of this demographic information on service delivery needs
- how the proposed service would deliver value for money
- how proposed staffing levels would be determined in light of expected client numbers
- in depth details of their relationships with other organisations (including where there were MOUs in place) that represent and/or provide related support services, and described the referral pathways which will impact on client numbers.