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Disability Employment – Tourism Local Navigators Pilot

Feedback for applicants

The Department of Social Services (DSS) has provided the following general feedback for applicants of the Disability Employment – Tourism Local Navigators Pilot (the Pilot) grant opportunity.

Overview

The grant opportunity application period opened on 10 January 2023 and closed on 21 February 2023. Thirty-nine applications were received. Following the Delegate's decision, 12 applications were selected for funding, totalling \$2,993,452.63 (GST excl.).

The tourism sector comprises a wide range of industries which provide goods and services to visitors who travel to visit friends and relatives, for leisure, education, business and employment.

This sector has a large proportion of small-to-medium sized enterprises (SME) identified as having significant job shortages and high potential for growth. The focus of the Pilot includes all businesses in, and servicing, the tourism industry including but not limited to accommodation, hospitality, attractions, food and beverage and transport.

The Pilot will operate over a 12-month period, testing a new approach to reduce barriers faced by SMEs when hiring people with disability. It will support employers by providing place-based Local Navigators to assist small (less than 20 employees) and medium (between 20 and 99 employees) sized businesses in the tourism sector to be more confident to engage with and offer employment to people with disability.

The Pilot will positively impact people with disability who are currently unemployed, under employed, with partial capacity or temporary incapacity, those receiving income support and/or National Disability Insurance Scheme funding and those who have never sought government assistance, find suitable and sustainable employment in the tourism sector.



Selection process

The Community Grants Hub undertook the screening for organisation eligibility and compliance against the requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. This information was provided to DSS for the final decision on whether an application did not meet the eligibility and/or compliance criteria.

DSS assessed and considered eligible and compliant applications through an open competitive selection grant process. All assessed applications were considered by the Selection Advisory Panel. The panel, established by DSS was comprised of subject matter experts. The panel assessed applications and provided advice to inform the department's funding recommendations to the Delegate.

Applications were assessed on merit, based on:

- how well it met the criteria
- how it compared to other applications
- the project plan, budget and other required attachments
- whether it provided value for money.

Each applicant was required to address the following selection criteria:

Criterion 1 – Demonstrate the value of the project activity to small and medium tourism businesses in the region

Criterion 2 – Demonstrate how the project activity will contribute to the objectives of the grant opportunity

Criterion 3 – Demonstrate your capability and capacity to undertake the project activity

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.

Applications which did not meet the requirements within the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, were notified of this outcome in writing.

Selection results

There was a strong interest in the program and successful applications were of a very high standard. All eligible applications were assessed according to the procedure detailed in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines and outlined in the selection process above.

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.

DSS selected 12 organisations to deliver the Disability Employment – Tourism Local Navigators Pilot grant.

Preferred applicants provided strong responses to the selection criteria and demonstrated their ability to meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. Further detail about what constituted a strong response to each criterion is provided below.

Criterion 1

Demonstrate the value of the project activity to small and medium tourism businesses in the region

When addressing the criterion applications:

- described the need for the particular project activity demonstrating nuanced local understanding of the tourism sector, local business needs around recruitment, training and retention of staff and the barriers preventing tapping into people with disability
- demonstrated the understanding of current supports available for businesses wishing to engage people with a disability and any local gaps that the proposed activity would address
- identified intended outcomes of the proposed project activity for both businesses and people with a disability seeking to participate in the labour market.

Strength	Example
Strong applications were required to demonstrate a considered response covering all aspects of the criterion	Strong responses focused on a specified region, and demonstrated a good understanding of the nature of that region in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the local tourism offering• the nature of the region's small and medium sized tourism businesses• available disability supports.
Strong applications were required to demonstrate a high level of local knowledge, expertise and insight	Strong responses described: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• regional challenges, needs and gaps in provision.
Strong applications were required to demonstrate a clearly articulated understanding of intended outcomes of the proposed activity relating to the applicant's region/context	Strong responses demonstrated: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a credible plan to contribute towards addressing challenges, needs and gaps in provision.

Criterion 2

Demonstrate how the project activity will contribute to the objectives of the grant opportunity

When addressing the criterion applications:

- described the activities they would deliver and provided information demonstrating expected outputs and how these would contribute to improved outcomes for small and medium sized tourism enterprises and people with a disability
- described how the project activity would benefit the tourism and disability sectors and the community
- identified the key stakeholders of their project activity and described how they would engage with them to maximise project outcomes
- described how they will evaluate outcomes of the project and disseminate project findings and/or resources.

Strength	Example
Strong applications were required to describe a considered activity proposal with sufficient detail	Strong responses demonstrated: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a comprehensive project plan with activities aligning with the level of funding requested• realistic likely outputs and outcomes.
Strong applications were required to describe realistic timeframes	Strong responses demonstrated: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• alignment with the 12 month Pilot timeline• a realistic understanding of time needed for recruitment, material development, communication, outreach and evaluation.
Strong applications were required to describe an appropriate plan for stakeholder engagement	Strong responses described: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a list of local stakeholders impacted by the proposed activities, their unique needs and an approach for stakeholder engagement.

Criterion 3

Demonstrate your capability and capacity to undertake the project activity

When addressing the criterion applications described the:

- ability to connect with a diverse range of people with disability, disability organisations and service providers
- experience in delivering projects that assist small and medium sized tourism business address employment issues; and how their experience can be used or adapted to support employment outcomes for people with disability in their chosen employment region
- project management capability, including the number of key staff who will manage and/or deliver the activity and their relevant experience, skills and qualifications
- particular areas within their employment region they will focus on, their proposed governance structure, management (including risk management), financial and administration systems they will use to support the administration and delivery of the activity, including ensuring activities are in addition to services already being delivered under any other funding arrangements.

Strength	Example
Strong applications were required to demonstrate previous track record of delivering proposed activities on time and on budget	<p>Strong responses described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific previous examples of successfully project managing the delivery of services for people with disability/for small business/the tourism sector including outputs and outcomes.
Strong applications were required to demonstrate an ability to work flexibly to meet the needs of business, business leaders and employees	<p>Strong responses demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific previous examples of working flexibly to meet a range of complex needs.
Strong applications were required to demonstrate an ability to co-design activities that are demand-driven at the personal and corporate level	<p>Strong responses described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific previous examples of co-design and particular organisational capacity/structures enabling meaningful co-design.
Strong applications were required to demonstrate their capacity to deliver project to expected timelines and quality	<p>Strong responses demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific detail on organisational capacity including staffing levels and relevant experience, governance oversight, leadership structures and physical and non-tangible assets.



Strength	Example
Strong applications were required to demonstrate nominated staff have experience and capacity to deliver.	Strong responses demonstrated: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a detailed overview of who will be responsible for delivering the proposed project including credentials.
Strong applications were required to describe a budget which clearly sets out what funding will be spent on and is reasonable	Strong responses demonstrated: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a transparent, well justified budget proportionate to the 12 month timeframe of the Pilot, quantity and complexity of proposed project activities.

Individual feedback

Individual feedback will not be provided for this grant opportunity.