



Community Child Care Fund – Establishing Child Care in Limited Supply Areas

Feedback for applicants

The Department of Education has provided the following General Feedback for applicants of the Community Child Care Fund – Establishing Child Care in Limited Supply Areas grant opportunity.

Overview

The application submission period opened on 3 May 2023 and closed on 8 June 2023. The grant opportunity received 150 applications.

The grant opportunity was available to eligible providers to establish new centre based day care (CBDC) services or family day care (FDC) premises in identified disadvantaged regional and remote areas of Australia where there is an absence, or limited supply, of approved CBDC or FDC services. These grants are for the 2 year period from 2023–24 and 2024–25.

The intended outcomes of the grant opportunity are to:

- establish new early childhood services in disadvantaged regional or remote communities where there is a gap in the supply of approved services
- support newly established services in disadvantaged regional and remote communities to operate sustainably, engage local workforce, and address community level barriers to participation in early childhood education
- increase the number of children from disadvantaged regional and remote areas accessing early childhood education
- increase the availability of approved early childhood education in disadvantaged regional and remote communities with high unmet demand through capital works projects.

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 the Department of Education for the final decision on whether an application did not meet the eligibility and/or compliance criteria.

The Department of Education's Assessment Panel assessed and considered all applications through an Open Competitive grant process. When assessing applications the Assessment Panel assessed applications against the assessment criterion, as set out in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, and provided an initial score. Each assessed application was moderated by at least one other Assessment Panel member.

The Department of Education's Selection Advisory Panel reviewed applications and assessment outcomes, and provided the final funding recommendations to the Financial Delegate. The Assessment Panel and Selection Advisory Panel, comprised of subject matter experts across policy, program, compliance and service delivery.

The Selection Advisory Panel took into consideration when making their final recommendations, how well an application met the requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, including however not limited to:

- meeting the identified compliance requirements
- meeting the identified eligibility requirements
- how well the application addressed the assessment criterion
- the extent to which the application compared to other applications
- alignment of the grant funding element applied for in the required attachments
- how well the application demonstrated it would provide value with relevant money.

The preferred applicants demonstrated their ability to meet the grant requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines based on the strength of their responses to the assessment criterion.

Where applications did not meet the requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, applicants were notified of the outcome in writing by the Community Grants Hub.

Selection Results

There was a strong interest in the program and applications were of a high standard. Assessment of applications was in accordance to the procedure detailed in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines and outlined in the Selection Process above.

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

Criterion 1: Describe the need for a Centre Based Day Care (CBDC) or Family Day Care (FDC) service in the regional or remote community where you propose establishing a new early childhood service, including information on:

- evidence of gaps in availability of approved early childhood education, for instance how far families travel to reach the nearest approved service from the proposed location of your new service, including existing and/or potential market failure
- proposed capacity of the new service given estimated number of children likely to attend
- include information that supports your application such as population data; evidence of need and support from families, schools or community groups; existing early childhood services in the area or proposals for other early childhood services.

Strength

Strong applications addressed all sub-criterion and provided evidence to substantiate claims.

Strong applications demonstrated an understanding of the needs and gaps in the community, were well researched and referenced sourced data. For example, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) census data, Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) community profiles.

Strong applications detailed consultation undertaken within the community, such as other child care providers, to demonstrate unmet demand.

Criterion 2: (If applied for Establishment and Sustainability funding element)

Describe your organisation's proposal for the use of establishment and sustainability funding and address how your organisation will:

- increase access and participation of children from families in the disadvantaged regional or remote community where the new service will be located
- improve workforce participation of local families or improve job opportunities for local workforce
- implement a business plan for a sustainable business model for the proposed new service
- determine the operational start-up and forward years sustainability costs to be funded through this grant, including consideration of costs or disadvantages specific to location
- ensure the availability of qualified and experienced staff to deliver the proposal.

Strength

Strong applications addressed all sub-criterion and provided a detailed and well thought out approach to increase access and participation of families, including engagement with local community organisations.

Strong applications provided a detailed approach to increase workforce participation, including strategies to recruit and retain staff.

Strong applications provided a detailed business plan, including a financial budget over 3 years, and timeline of activities that showed a viable framework for a sustainable business model.

Criterion 3: (If applied for Capital Support funding element)

Describe how your organisation's proposal for capital works funding will address a high need for approved early childhood education in a disadvantaged regional or remote area, including:

- how your capital works project will address a gap in service provision
- how you estimated the cost of the project and how you will manage unexpected expenses, including how grant funding will be used to deliver the proposal (including indicative quotes)
- the result of your efforts in securing other financial contributions for your project (for example, bank, local council, charity, community organisation)
- how your organisation will ensure the capital construction will be completed as planned.

Strength

Strong applications addressed all sub-criterion and provided a clear link between the capital project and, the unmet demand or supply gap.

Strong applications provided detailed indicative project costs and project timeline.

Strong applications identified a co-contribution of at least 50% of the total project costs, including other financial and in-kind contributions.

Strong applications provided supporting attachments such as construction quotes and plans.



Criterion 4: Describe how your organisation will provide value with money in delivery of the service, including management of:

- project timing that includes the approval process to operate a new early childhood service under Family Assistance Law
- finances (including previous grants management experience and proposal for long term sustainability)
- human resources, attraction and retention of qualified staff
- administrative processes
- governance structures.

Strength

Strong applications addressed all sub-criterion and demonstrated viable operations.

Strong applications detailed the operational structure and administrative processes, including governance arrangements.

Strong applications demonstrated previous experience in managing grants.

Strong applications detailed employment pathways and development opportunities to engage and retain staff.

Individual feedback

As per section 9.1 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, individual feedback will not be provided for this grant opportunity.