Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) Social and Community Participation Grant Opportunity 2023–24

General Feedback

The Department of Social Services (the department) has provided the following general feedback for applicants of the Information Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) – Social and Community Participation 2023–24 (SCP) grant opportunity.

Assessment of applications was in accordance with the procedure detailed in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines and outlined in the selection process below.

Overview

The application submission period opened on 25 August 2023 and closed on 6 October 2023. The grant opportunity received 640 applications.

The ILC program is a Commonwealth grants program which supports all people with disability, regardless of whether they are eligible for a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) individually funded package.

The goal of the ILC program is to increase social and community participation for all people with disability by:

- Building the capacity of people with disability to participate in their community.
- Creating opportunities for people with disability to participate by creating more inclusive services and communities.

The objective of the SCP grant opportunity is to support people with disability, their families and carers to participate, contribute and benefit from mainstream community activities including arts, culture, sport and recreation.

The intended outcomes of the SCP stream are people with disability, their families and carers:

- Have greater opportunities to participate and contribute in the community.
- Have increased accessibility to, and inclusion in, communities.

Funding of up to $50 million was available.

Selection Process

The Community Grants Hub (the Hub) undertook the initial screening for organisation eligibility and compliance against the requirements outlined in the grant opportunity guidelines. This information was provided to the department's grant opportunity delegate for final decisions on whether an application met the eligibility and compliance criteria.

The Hub undertook the preliminary assessment on all applications received through an Open Competitive grant process. Applications which had undergone preliminary assessment were provided to the department's selection advisory panel (the panel) for deliberation.

The panel established by the department, comprised of subject matter experts who assessed applications and provided advice to inform the funding recommendations to the Financial Delegate.

When assessing and deliberating on applications the panel took into consideration a number of factors incorporating the inclusion or exclusion of late applications, the volume of applications received, meeting the identified requirements outlined in the guidelines and the available funding envelope.

The panel's consideration of assessed applications was, based on:

- Compliance with the grant opportunity guidelines.

- Suitability against the eligibility criteria in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

- Whether the proposed activities targeted a priority cohort.

- How well the application responses met the assessment criterion.

- The extent to which applications compared against other applications.

- Whether the application provided value with relevant money.

General Comments from the Panel

The panel noted the general strengths of the applications, highlighting the following themes:

- Applications which were considered to be aligned with the Social Model of Disability and the outcomes of the SCP stream were highly regarded.

- Applications which demonstrated how the activities would result in an increase in social and community participation were highly regarded. The panel noted there was a degree of cross over between the various streams and activities.

- Applications which identified how many people with disabilities would benefit from and be involved in the co-design and implementation of the activities were highly regarded. These applications placed an emphasis on the lived experience of people involved with the activities.

- Applications which identified existing relationships, and how this would result in increased social and community participation for people with disability were highly regarded.

- Activities which clearly identified a relationship with mainstream activities, rather than segregated activities (except where safety concerns exist), were highly regarded.

- The state and territory government expert advisers noted applications who allocated appropriate funding and were able to outline on-the-ground contacts in the proposed delivery jurisdictions were highly regarded.

- Applications which demonstrated the ability to provide face-to-face services and a presence in, or connection to, nominated jurisdictions were highly regarded.

The panel also noted:

- Expert advice sought from state and territory governments identified not all projects listed as having a 'National' reach had the capacity to deliver nationally.

- Applications which aligned closely with the Individual Capacity Building stream and or Economic Participation stream were not viewed favourably.

- Applications which focused on medical and or clinical aspects were not viewed favourably, as the majority of these responsibilities fall under health rather than social participation.

- A considerable number of applications were seeking to develop resources which already exist or are available in varying formats.

Selection Results

There was strong interest in the grant opportunity. The preferred applicants demonstrated their ability to meet the grant requirements outlined in the guidelines based on the strength of their responses to the assessment criterion.

The Hub notified applicants of the outcome in writing, where their applications did not meet the requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

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

Criterion 1

Describe the proposed activity/ies to be delivered over the life of the grant and explain why these are needed.

When addressing the criterion, a strong application:

- outlined the problem/need being addressed as part of the grant opportunity

- explained which activities would be undertaken to address the problem/need

- detailed why the activity/project was needed by their target group and included supporting evidence where possible

- explained how the proposal addressed the grant opportunity objectives outlined in section 2.1

- identified where the activities are located, why they are needed in that location and how they would be delivered in each location (that is, in person/other).

Applicants were also asked to have:

- listed milestones (including the independent evaluation) and timeframes of the project

- explained how the milestones would be achieved, including what 'success' would look like and how they would test it

- identified how the project is different to existing practices and explained the innovative aspects

- outlined the risks associated with implementing their project, including any mitigation and management strategies in place.

Strong applications:

- Clearly described the problem and or need, identified target cohort/s and linked these to the aim of the grant opportunity. To support their claim, applicants provided supporting evidence of the problem and or need their application was aiming to address.

- Provided a detailed description of each activity they were proposing to deliver including how the activity would be delivered and clearly linked the activity to the problem and or need the applicant was addressing.

- Provided a detailed description of why the activity would address the needs of their target cohort/s.

- Provided a combination of evidence including anecdotal, feedback from consultations and research, specifically for their target cohort/s.

- Clearly linked the intended outcomes of their proposed activity to the grant objectives.

- Provided a range of evidence to support why the target cohort/s, in each selected geographical area needed this activity, including the relevant socio-demographics statistics. The service delivery model was clearly described and clarified, for example, if the project was online, in person, or a combination of both.

- In addition applicants:
    - Provided a detailed description of milestones and timeframes for the project.

    - Explained how the milestones would be achieved, including what 'success' would look like and how it would be tested, including the methodologies which would be used.

    - Identified how the project was different to existing practices and explained the innovative aspects.

    - Outlined the risks associated with implementing the project, including any mitigation and management strategies in place.

Criterion 2

Provide details of how people with disability will be involved in planning and implementing the grant activity/ies, the expected outcomes and the project's potential for sustainability.

When addressing the criterion, a strong application:

- demonstrated the involvement people with disability would have in the project

- explained the expected outcomes and how they would measure the outcomes achieved

- explained how the applicant would record and apply learnings from the project

- detailed how their activity/ies could be scaled up and/or how the activities would be sustainable beyond the grant period.

Strong applications:

- Provided details about the levels of involvement people with disability would have throughout the project, specific roles, the organisation's experience in co-design with the target cohort/s and the expected benefits for individuals and community.

- Detailed specific measures for each of the expected outcomes, including a description of qualitative and quantitative methods.

- Detailed how outcomes would be recorded and inform future recommendations.

- Identified potential and existing support systems to enhance the longevity of the project, the dissemination and/or access to developed resources, and connected this to their overall vision/aims for the project and the broader community.

Criterion 3

Demonstrate your organisation's capability and capacity to successfully deliver the grant activity/ies.

When addressing the criterion, a strong application:

- demonstrated the organisation's experience and capacity including experience in delivering similar projects

- described the organisation's existing partnerships with key stakeholders and explained their role in the project

- provided details of the key stakeholders and/or partnerships required to successfully implement the activity/ies.

Strong applications:

- Detailed the organisation's structure, governance and the suitability of key personnel in relation to the project.

- Demonstrated the organisation's level of experience in managing projects, current and previous relationships with the target cohort/s and other relevant expertise.

- Provided detailed information on partnerships and how they would leverage these relationships to contribute to the project and to the organisation.

- Distinguished between existing and future relationships, provided detail on how these relationships would be developed and why they are needed to successfully implement the activity.

Individual feedback

Individual feedback will not be provided for this grant opportunity.