



# National Justice Reinvestment Program - Round 1

## Feedback for applicants

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The Attorney-General's Department (the department) has provided the following general feedback for applicants of the National Justice Reinvestment Program - Round 1 grant opportunity.

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

## Overview

The application submission period for Assessment cycle 1 opened on 14 September 2023 and closed on 12 October 2023.

The application submission period for Assessment cycle 2 opened on 12 October 2023 and closed on 5 January 2024.

Justice reinvestment aims to prevent and reduce Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples contact with the criminal justice system. Justice reinvestment is a long term, community led and place-based approach which enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and leaders to come together to identify local solutions to local issues, using strengths of community, cultural knowledge, and stories to measure progress over time. It offers a way for communities to drive local solutions through improved collaboration and partnership with governments and service providers.

The intended outcomes of this grant opportunity were:


- To reduce contact with the criminal justice system and incarceration rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults and young people, in line with Closing the Gap Targets 10 and 11.
- To contribute to systemic reform of government systems which intersect with the justice system.
- To contribute to building a strong and sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector delivering high quality services to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the country.

## Selection Process

The Community Grants Hub (the Hub) undertook the initial screening for organisation eligibility and compliance against the requirements outlined in the 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 department assessed and considered all applications through an open non-competitive grant process. The selection advisory panel (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.

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When assessing applications the panel took into consideration several factors including the inclusion and 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 guidelines
- suitability against the eligibility criteria in the guidelines
- how well the applications' responses met the assessment criterion
- whether it provided value with relevant money
- whether the applicant was an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled organisation, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Operated and Controlled organisation or other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation which intended to or could demonstrate a plan to become a Community Controlled organisation in the future
- the extent to which evidence contained in the application demonstrated the project would contribute to meeting its proposed outcomes and or objectives.

## Selection Results

There was a strong interest in the grant opportunity and applications were of a high standard. 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 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.

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## Criterion 1

### Why do you think Justice Reinvestment is a good fit for your community?

Applicants told us about some of the challenges in their community impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults and/ or youth justice outcomes and the need for change.

In the application applicants:

- described some of the factors driving contact with the criminal justice system by First Nations adults and/or youth in their community
- provided examples of how First Nations community members were coming together to gather information, and build support for community-led change to improve justice outcomes
- described the primary areas where First Nations community members were looking to lead and drive solutions, centred in local culture, knowledge and voices.

Strong applications:

- demonstrated a strong understanding of what justice reinvestment is and how it works
- demonstrated the proposal is place-based, that is, it will be implemented by people in the location of the program and will be designed specifically for the location
- demonstrated how the approach would address the systems of justice, and not just implement a program.

## Criterion 2

### What will you do with justice reinvestment funding if successful?

Applicants described their proposed project, plan or strategy and how it would prevent and reduce contact with the criminal justice system among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults and/or youth in their area.

In the application applicants:

- described how First Nations community members have been involved in leading its design
- described the specific actions they would like to pursue to help prevent and reduce contact with the criminal justice system among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults and/or youth living in their community
- described how their project, plan or strategy would continue to be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led and centred around a shared connection to place
- described whether they planned to collaborate with relevant services, stakeholders, or organisations to achieve their projects aims. If so, who and why?

Strong applications:

- demonstrated how the initiative would be community led and/or had community buy in. This was demonstrated within the application and through letters of support from community members and/or relevant organisations
- demonstrated plans to work with diverse stakeholder organisations.

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- demonstrated how First Nations people would be involved in the design and leadership of the initiative, either through the work plan or governance structures.

### Criterion 3

#### How will you do it?

Applicants described how their organisation would deliver the project, including providing information on:

- who would run the day to day operation of the project (for example, staff, budgets) and how major decisions would be made (for example, a decision-making structure) over time including thorough activity work plans or draft budgets, where appropriate
- how they would measure and evaluate progress over the course of the project (what data they would use, and what does success look like in their local context)
- if the organisation would seek financial, in-kind, or logistical support from other organisations to maximise impact or strengthen the financial sustainability of the project over the long term (for example, non-government-organisations, philanthropic funders, service providers, local/state/territory governments).

Strong applications:

- demonstrated value for money, particularly that the budget was appropriate to the scale of the initiative, including if an initiative involved organisations in a consortium, and why a larger budget may have been appropriate
- demonstrated data partnerships within their community to best evaluate the impact of their initiative.

### Individual feedback

Individual feedback will be provided for this grant opportunity. To request individual feedback please follow the instructions as set out in section 9.1 of the guidelines.