



# Disability Employment Advocacy and Information Program

## Feedback for applicants

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The Department of Social Services (the department) has provided the following general feedback for applicants of the Disability Employment Advocacy and Information Program 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 opened on 23 November 2023 and closed on 18 January 2024. The grant opportunity received 28 applications for consideration.

This grant will be used to establish a new disability employment advocacy and information program to provide people with disability with high support needs, their families, and carers with access to advocacy support and information to build their confidence and understanding about their rights and options at work.

## Selection Process

The Community Grants Hub (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 Hub undertook the preliminary assessment on all applications through an Open Competitive grant process. Applications which had undergone preliminary assessment were provided to the department's selection advisory panel (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 including 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 overall objectives of the grant opportunity
- suitability and compliance against the eligibility criteria in the grant opportunity guidelines
- the extent applications compared against other applications
- the proposal for how the program would be delivered, including the proposal delivery areas
- whether it provided value with relevant money
- (if known) any identified risks and the proposed mitigation strategies for the department and the Commonwealth.



## Selection Results

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

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.

### Criterion 1

Experience with people with high support needs and providing employment related advocacy supports.

When addressing the criterion applicants:

- outlined their experience in providing advocacy services for people with high support needs, including their use of supported decision-making principles
- demonstrated their knowledge of workplace relations and working rights for people with high support needs
- summarised an understanding of employment options and pathways for people with high support needs including supported employment, social enterprises, open employment and customised employment
- detailed their experience in developing resources and holding workshops to help individuals with disability, their families and carers to build skills in areas such as supported decision making, self-advocacy and job skills.

### Strong applications:

- provided strong examples of supported decision-making with the cohort and described the key factors in this process
- provided current examples of supporting the specific cohort, to address their rights in the workplace and how the advocates and organisation, maintained currency of their legislative knowledge and expertise
- provided detailed information on each of the various employment options with examples of specific business linkages and/or planned expansion and case studies of the targeted cohort on diverse pathways
- provided examples of developed resources and past workshops on relevant topics.



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## Criterion 2

Ability to provide unbiased information and advocacy supports.

When addressing the criterion applicants:

- explained how they would respect the choice of people with high support needs in whatever employment option they choose
- described how they would act as an independent body for people with high support needs and their families and carers and provide unbiased supports and information workshops
- outlined how information could be provided that detailed a range of employment pathways for people with high support needs, including both open and supported employment.

### Strong applications:

- provided a detailed description of their processes to ensure individual choice and/or provided an example, demonstrating these processes
- described how they minimised any conflict of interest and maintained their organisational independence and fairly represented all options, to enhance individual choices and preferences
- outlined how they would avoid bias in the delivery of the grant
- defined the format/s of the information, how it could be accessed and specifically which employment pathways were included.



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### Criterion 3

Ability to deliver the program nationally, consider existing programs, frameworks, and stakeholders.

When addressing the criterion applicants:

- described how they would liaise with appropriate stakeholders
- described how they would ensure their activities are delivered across all states and territories, including face-to-face delivery in all states and territories, the anticipated frequency of delivery and the approach to be taken for online delivery of services and supports
- outlined how they would deliver the disability program in line with the guiding principles for the future of supported employment
- explained their ability to work with a range of employers, including Australian Disability Enterprises, social enterprises and open employers
- outlined their ability to work with other disability or advocacy organisations (as required) if there was an intention to sub-contract
- explained how they would consider the work currently being undertaken by the NDAP, work under the new National Disability Advocacy Framework and consider any existing Commonwealth and state/territory funded advocacy programs in program design to minimise the risk of duplication of services and support good participant experience.

#### Strong applications:

- explained how they would liaise with appropriate stakeholders throughout the delivery of the program
- provided a well thought through proposal for delivery of the program in each state and territory, for both in person and virtual services
- described how they would deliver the program in line with the guiding principles
- demonstrated that all aspects of program delivery had been considered, including potential subcontracting arrangements, stakeholders, locations, timing and how the program would be delivered best for the target cohort
- referred specifically to the NDAP framework, naming existing national and state services, and how they would work, within the parameters of each program.



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## Criterion 4

Deliver value for money for Government.

When addressing the criterion applicants:

- outlined a proposed payment structure
- detailed how the grant would deliver value for money for Government.

**Strong applications:**

- provided a timeline with payment amounts, for the grant period
- described the qualitative and quantitative benefits of their proposal, for all stakeholders.

## Individual feedback

Individual feedback will not be provided for this grant opportunity.