

2023–24 Volunteer Grants

Feedback for applicants

The Department of Social Services (the department) has provided the following general feedback for applicants of the 2023–24 Volunteer Grants grant opportunity.

Overview

The application submission period opened on 6 November 2023 and closed on 24 November 2023.

The electorate based, closed, non-competitive selection process was designed to ensure grant funding addressed local priorities and achieved an equitable geographic distribution of funding. Members of Parliament (MPs) in collaboration with their Community Committees nominated organisations from within their electorate to apply for funding. The department subsequently invited the nominated organisations to apply. The department considered all applications in line with the Grant Opportunity Guidelines (guidelines).

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

The department assessed all applications based on:

- compliance with the guidelines
- suitability against the eligibility criteria in the guidelines
- whether it provided value with relevant money
- identified risks and the proposed mitigation strategies for the department and the Commonwealth.

Selection results

There was a strong interest in the program. Assessment of applications was in accordance with the procedure detailed in the guidelines and outlined in the selection process above.

The selected organisations demonstrated their ability to meet the eligibility and compliance requirements outlined in the guidelines.



General feedback

This feedback is to assist grant applicants to understand what generally comprised a strong application and provides guidance in completing grant applications for future grant opportunities.

Read the supporting information before applying

- It was important to read all available information provided about the Volunteer Grants grant opportunity when applying for funding, especially grant opportunity documents on the [GrantConnect¹](#) website. The grant opportunity documents were specific to the Volunteer Grants program and contained important information about the purpose of the program, eligibility and compliance requirements, timeframes and how to apply.
- The application form included helpful information and details relating to priorities for funding and mandatory information required for the selection process.


Review the application form prior to submission

- Applicants were encouraged to check their application form for completeness and accuracy prior to submission, including:
 - the completion in full of all mandatory fields, in particular providing the correct bank account and contact details
 - providing answers to all questions and ensuring they saved the application form
 - mandatory attachments were completed and saved into the relevant section/s within the application form.
- Lack of, or missing information, may have impacted the overall consideration of an application.
- The Hub's Hotline was available via support@communitygrants.gov.au to assist.
- Applications which were not completed in full or correctly as per the guidelines may have been deemed as non-compliant or ineligible and may not have been considered for funding.

Eligible entity types

- Organisations needed to clearly establish their legal entity status to ensure they had the required legal entity status to apply for Volunteer Grants:
 - Organisations were encouraged to seek information as to whether their legal entity name and/or trading name was registered for use under the Australian Business Number (ABN) they provided in the application form. It was important that applicants applying as a legal entity provided the correct ABN associated with the legal name and/or trading name of their organisation.
 - Unincorporated organisations were required to nominate an individual to accept personal legal liability on behalf of the organisation.
 - Applicants needed to read the grant opportunity documents to understand eligibility requirements.

¹ <https://www.grants.gov.au/>

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- The department may have requested additional supporting documentation to confirm an organisation's entity type and status, for example, certificate of incorporation or trust deed.

Multiple applications

- As per section 4.1 of the guidelines an organisation could only apply for one Volunteer Grant. Where an organisation worked across more than one electorate, and had been nominated by more than one MP, it could only apply for a Volunteer Grant in one electorate.
- Where an organisation submitted more than one application the department determined which application would proceed, according to the process specified in the guidelines. As per section 7, where an organisation applied across multiple electorates, the application for the highest grant amount was considered for a Volunteer Grant.
- Organisations completing an application form were encouraged to consult with other members of their organisation to ensure the submission of only one application form per organisation.
- Local branches of larger umbrella organisations (for example, Scouts Australia) were considered to be organisations in their own right, however if the department was unable to identify their structure from publicly available information, only one application from the organisation was accepted.

Organisation not invited to apply

- As per section 4.1 of the guidelines an organisation was only able to apply for a grant if they were nominated by the MP and were invited by the department to apply. Organisations who were not invited to apply were unable to be assessed.

Individual feedback

Individual feedback will not be provided for this grant opportunity.