

# Community Support – Small Grants for Volunteer Involving Organisations

## GRANT OPPORTUNITY GUIDELINES

<b>Opening date for expressions of interest:</b>	9:00 AM AEST 18 September 2024
<b>Closing date and time for expressions of interest:</b>	4:00 PM AEST 4 October 2024
<b>Commonwealth policy entity:</b>	Department of Social Services
<b>Administering entity:</b>	Volunteering Victoria
<b>Enquiries:</b>	If you have any questions, contact Volunteering Victoria:  Phone: 03 9052 4524  Email: <a href="mailto:grants@volunteeringvictoria.org.au">grants@volunteeringvictoria.org.au</a>  Questions should be sent no later than 5:00 pm AEST on 3 October 2024
<b>Date guidelines released:</b>	18 September 2024
<b>Type of grant opportunity:</b>	Open Competitive



Funded by the Australian Government  
Department of Social Services.



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Social Services**

*The seven State and Territory volunteering peak bodies acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to Elders past and present.*

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# 1. About the grant

These guidelines contain information for the Strong and Resilient Communities (SARC) – Community Support – Small grants for Volunteer Involving Organisations.

The State/Territory Volunteering Peak Bodies (funded by the Department of Social Services) are managing the selection and allocation process of small grants to community organisations to support the social and economic participation of vulnerable and disadvantaged people by strengthening volunteering through capability and capacity building.

It contributes to the achievement of the Volunteering and Community Connectedness Component within the Families and Communities Program of the Department of Social Services (the Department) Portfolio Budget Statement.

Grants of between \$10,000 - \$20,000 (GST excl) are available to enable volunteer involving organisations to strengthen their volunteering programs through capability and capacity building. A total pool of \$500,000 (GST excl) will be available within Victoria.

All applications must be submitted online in their local State/Territory, which for Victoria can be found on the [Volunteering Victoria website](#).

In developing these grant guidelines, the State and Territory volunteering peak bodies<sup>1</sup> have adhered to the [Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines](#), with a particular emphasis on the seven key principles of the administration:

- Robust planning and design
- Collaboration and partnership
- Proportionality
- An outcomes orientation
- Achieving value with relevant money
- Governance and accountability
- Probity and transparency

In addition, the principle of proportionality has been applied to the development of this grant application process and the guidelines as consistent with the [Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines](#).

## 1.1 Objectives

The objectives of these grants are to build volunteer management capability within organisations to uplift volunteer capability, including volunteer knowledge, skills and volunteer numbers, and to support alignment with the strategic objectives of the [National Strategy for Volunteering](#) and the [National Standards for Volunteer Involvement](#) in organisations that support:

- young people 12 to 18 years who are disengaged, or at risk of disengaging, from education to reconnect with their community, school, training and/or employment

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<sup>1</sup> The Centre for Volunteering NSW, VolunteeringACT, Volunteering Qld, Volunteering SA/NT, Volunteering Tasmania, Volunteering Victoria, Volunteering WA

- people with disabilities and/or mental health conditions to participate in the community, and work towards becoming or remaining independent and engaged in the economy and/or society
- women who experience, or are at risk of experiencing isolation or discrimination to participate in the community and/or economy and increase their self-agency
- people who are unemployed to increase participation in their community and/or increase their capacity to engage in employment, training, or existing employment services.

## 1.2 Outcomes

The intended outcomes of the grant are to increase the capability and capacity for volunteer involving organisations to uplift volunteer capability, including volunteer knowledge, skills and volunteer numbers, to support:

- increased social, civic and economic participation
- reduced levels of social isolation/increased sense of belonging in communities
- people to be self-reliant, empowered and experience an improved sense of wellbeing
- people to be engaged in education, training and work-ready services and activities
- people to improve work skills and have increased opportunities for paid work
- people to engage with and sustain engagement with community services and activities
- people to improve connections and linkages to services that further support their increased social, civic and economic participation.

This grant will be administered by the Volunteering Peak Bodies in each State and Territory as agents of the Department. The grant is to be undertaken in accordance with the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines \(CGRGs\)](#).

## 1.3 Grant period and timing of the grant process

A one-off amount of between \$10,000 - \$20,000 (GST exclusive) per organisation is available across the SARC - Community Support – Small grants for Volunteer Involving Organisations grant opportunity. Funding will be provided in the 2024-2025 financial year, with activities delivered by 30 May 2025.

Funding must only be used for the purpose for which it is granted.

### Grant Timelines

Announcement of Grant Opportunity	10 September 2024
Expressions of Interest open	18 September 2024
Expressions of Interest close	4 October 2024, 4pm AEST
Review against eligibility period	7 – 11 October 2024
Invitations to apply announced	14 October 2024
Applications close	28 October 2024 midday AEDT

Assessment and selection period	28 October 2024 – 22 November 2024
Notification of grant recipients	25 November 2024
Activity starts	From 29 November 2024
Activity ends	30 May 2025
Final report due to Volunteering Victoria	16 June 2025, midday AEST
Financial acquittal report due to Volunteering Victoria	16 June 2025, midday AEST

## 2. Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not meet all the eligibility criteria.

The decision maker (the Department of Social Services) can choose to waive the eligibility criteria below in circumstances where the application meets the intent of the program and would otherwise be eligible.

### 2.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

The small grants are to build capacity of volunteering programs in organisations that:

- have an annual income under \$500,000 **OR** are an autonomous branch/subgroup of an organisation with an annual income greater than \$500,000, but that branch/subgroup income is under \$500,000.
- use a large proportion of volunteers (40%+ of total workforce including volunteers and employees, by headcount)
- are a not-for-profit organisation
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN) or be willing to provide a Statement by Supplier Form (reason for not quoting an ABN). Please refer to the [Australian Tax Office website](#) for further information; and
- have a bank account with an Australian financial institution.

### 2.2 Additional eligibility requirements

To be eligible to apply for this grant opportunity, your volunteer program must support one or more of the following cohorts:

- young people 12 to 18 years who are disengaged, or at risk of disengaging, from education to reconnect with their community, school, training and/or employment
- people with disabilities and/or mental health conditions to participate in the community, and work towards becoming or remaining independent and engaged in the economy and/or society
- women who experience, or are at risk of experiencing isolation or discrimination to participate in the community and/or economy and increase their self-agency

- people who are unemployed to increase participation in their community and/or increase their capacity to engage in employment, training, or existing employment services.

## 2.3 Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

- An organisation with an annual income over \$500,000 **OR** a dependent branch/sub-group of an organisation with an annual income greater than \$500,000
- A Sole Trader
- A for-profit organisation
- An International Entity
- An organisation included on the National Redress Scheme’s website on the list of [‘Institutions that have not yet joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme’](#). ([www.nationalredress.gov.au](http://www.nationalredress.gov.au)).

## 2.4 Child Safe Eligibility

To be eligible to apply, if a proposed activity involves interaction with children, applicants must comply with the Australian Government’s Child Safety obligations (please see Section 9 below). At a minimum applicants must, in delivering the proposed activity, be compliant with all relevant state, territory and Commonwealth law relating to employment or engagement of Child-Related Personnel and complete a G8A Child Safe Statement of Compliance.

If a proposed activity involves direct interaction with children, or children will be somehow involved in the activity, then applicants must, in delivering the proposed activity, also apply the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, undertake an annual risk assessment of child safety, provide child safe training and education for staff, and complete a CB9 Child Safe Statement of Compliance.

Details on the specific child safe eligibility criteria can be found on the [Child Safety for DSS grants](#)<sup>[1]</sup> webpage and the supporting [Frequently Asked Questions for DSS Grantees](#)<sup>[2]</sup>.

G8A and CB9 Child Safe Statements of Compliance can be found [here](#).

## 3. Eligible activities

### 3.1 What can grant recipients use the grant money for?

Small grant recipients, made up of community organisations, can use the grant to build the capacity within their volunteering programs, including volunteer knowledge and skills and volunteer numbers, and support alignment with the [National Strategy for Volunteering](#) for projects that meet the requirements outlined in Section 1 – About the grant, including the objectives, intended outcomes, and as defined in the grant agreement.

To be eligible, the volunteering programs must be targeted towards one or more of the cohorts outlined in Section 1.1 – Objectives.

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[1] <https://www.dss.gov.au/doing-business-with-dss/child-safety-for-dss-grants>

[2] <https://www.dss.gov.au/doing-business-with-dss-child-safety-for-dss-grants/frequently-asked-questions-for-dss-grantees>

The following table provides examples of eligible activities to support volunteers within your volunteering programs but is not exhaustive. Projects funded under this grant opportunity must directly relate to the grant objectives and outcomes.

<b>Cohorts who will benefit from the program</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<p>Young people 12 to 18 years who are disengaged, or at risk of disengaging, from education to reconnect with their community, school, training and/or employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural workshops with your volunteers to understand the needs of, and support young people aged 12-18</li> <li>• Training for volunteers to facilitate:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Social engagement activities</li> <li>○ Vocational training and skills development activities</li> <li>○ Education support and engagement activities</li> <li>○ Physical and mental health activities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Training opportunities for volunteer managers to improve the quality of volunteer programs e.g. building volunteer recruitment, engagement and retention.</li> <li>• Engaging consultants to review policies and processes (such as recruitment and retention processes) to align with National Standards for Volunteer Involvement and the National Strategy for Volunteering to promote inclusion of objective cohorts.</li> </ul>
<p>Women who experience, or are at risk of experiencing isolation or discrimination to participate in the community and/or economy and increase their self-agency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural workshops with your volunteers to understand the needs of, and support women experiencing isolation and/or discrimination</li> <li>• Training opportunities for volunteers to facilitate:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Group workshops</li> <li>○ Self-empowerment activities</li> <li>○ Connection of women to existing support services</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Training opportunities for volunteer managers to improve the quality of volunteer programs e.g. building volunteer engagement and retention to increase volunteer numbers.</li> <li>• Engaging consultants to review policies and processes (such as recruitment and retention processes) to align with National Standards for Volunteer Involvement and the National Strategy for Volunteering to promote inclusion of objective cohorts.</li> </ul>

<p>People with disabilities and/or mental health conditions to participate in the community, and work towards becoming or remaining independent and engaged in the economy and/or society</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural workshops with your volunteers to understand the needs of, and support people with disability and/or mental health conditions</li> <li>• Training opportunities for volunteers to facilitate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ activities that support independence and self-reliance</li> <li>○ work-readiness or educational tailored workshops</li> <li>○ wellbeing programs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Training opportunities for volunteer managers to improve the quality of volunteer programs e.g. building volunteer engagement and retention to increase volunteer numbers.</li> <li>• Projects that improve accessibility to your organisations services, for example accessibility upgrades to websites, or physical locations</li> <li>• Engaging consultants to review policies and processes (such as recruitment and retention processes) to align with National Standards for Volunteer Involvement and the National Strategy for Volunteering to promote inclusion of objective cohorts.</li> </ul>
<p>People who are unemployed increase participation in their community and/or increase their capacity to engage in employment, training, or existing employment services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural workshops with your volunteers to understand the needs of, and support people who are unemployed</li> <li>• Training opportunities for volunteers to facilitate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work-readiness or educational workshops</li> <li>○ Social connection and networking events</li> <li>○ One-on-one mentoring</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Training opportunities for volunteer managers to improve the quality of volunteer programs e.g. building volunteer engagement and retention to increase volunteer numbers.</li> <li>• Engaging consultants to review policies and processes (such as recruitment and retention processes) to align with National Standards for Volunteer Involvement and the National Strategy for Volunteering to promote inclusion of objective cohorts.</li> </ul>

### 3.2 What grant recipients cannot use the grant money for

Small grant recipients cannot use the grant for:

- Purchasing of small equipment unless it is directly involved in the delivery of the capacity



building project.

- Projects that have an ongoing service delivery model, such as intensive case management or counselling.
- Projects that duplicate another existing and available service.
- Projects that contain an extended period of community or participant consultation or co-design (more than 3 months).
- Projects that are either research or have research elements (beyond an evaluation component).
- The preparation of your Project Tender or documentation related to the Project Tender process.

## 4. How to apply

1. The Community Support Small Grants application is a two-step process: Submit an expression of interest. The expression of interest will be reviewed against the eligibility criteria. If it meets all criteria, you will be invited to the second step- submitting a funding application.
2. Submit the funding application. This will be either online through a portal, on an editable document or in hard-copy. The funding application form will be available once you are invited to apply. A sample application form can be accessed [here](#).

Before applying, you must read and understand these guidelines.

### Application Steps:

- Ensure your organisation meets all eligibility criteria
- Complete the online expression of interest form. This must be endorsed by an authorised signatory for the organisation (e.g. Chief Executive Officer, President, Chairperson, Treasurer or Secretary)
- Submit your expression of interest by 4pm AEST Friday 4 October 2024
- If you receive an invitation to submit a funding application, submit this online before the grant period closes, by midday AEDT Monday 28 October 2024.

If you have questions about any part of the application process, need support with completing the application or are experiencing technical difficulties, please contact us at Volunteering Victoria, by calling 03 9052 4524, or emailing [grants@volunteeringvictoria.org.au](mailto:grants@volunteeringvictoria.org.au).

**Please note:** You cannot change your application once it has been submitted.

You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents. You will receive an automated notification acknowledging the receipt of your application.

No late expressions of interest or applications will be accepted.

## 5. Grant selection process

Assessments will be undertaken through a competitive grant process.

All eligible expressions of interest will be invited to submit an application. Each State and Territory will elect at least 3 people per assessment panel, more people will be invited to the assessment panel in larger jurisdictions to assist with additional applications. Panel members will review and assess applications against the specified criteria.

### 5.1 Selection process

Each State and Territory volunteering peak body will have grant assessment panels in place. Each selection panel will be made up of representatives nominated by the relevant State/ Territory volunteering peak body and an independent probity advisor. The State/ Territory volunteering peak body will provide chairing and secretariat duties for selection panel meetings. All panelists will have a working knowledge of the volunteering sector. All decisions throughout the selection process will be documented.

Each selection panel will review grant applications based on merit and assessed against two equally weighted selection criteria noted below:

Selection Criteria	Weighting
What are the expected outcomes of this project?	50%
How will the project build capacity of volunteers to improve volunteer programs and impact objective cohorts?	50%

All applications will be assessed using a common appraisal process however the assessment process may rely on knowledge or documentation other than the application form. If this occurs the reasons will be documented.

Through the review process, if there are equal weightings for a number of applications and there are not sufficient funds remaining to fund those projects, the selection panel will determine the successful applicants from the equal weightings by taking into consideration the current distribution of successful applicants across geographical area (metro, regional, rural, remote) and service/sector type (e.g. animal welfare, sport and recreation, etc) to ensure a fair distribution of the funds across the sector. Partial funding may be awarded if the funding allocation does not allow for the full funding of the project.

The relevant staff from each volunteering peak body and those appointed to selection panels will be required to declare any conflict of interest they may have with any applicant.

A conflict of interest may arise:

- Where decision-makers or officials involved in grants administration have a direct or indirect interest, which may influence the selection of a particular grant activity
- Where members of external committees have a direct or indirect interest in informing a decision about expenditure or providing advice on grant opportunities
- Where a potential grantee has a direct or indirect interest, which may influence the selection of their proposed grant activity during the application process

In the decision-making process the selection panelists will consider and ensure proper use and management of public resources incorporating an assessment of value for money. An independent probity advisor will attend all grant panel meetings/be privy to all communication between those members and otherwise review all documentation and processes related to the grant.

Please note: Under these Guidelines 'proper' means efficient, effective, economical, and ethical.

The proposed list of successful applicants will be provided to the Department of Social Services for review and approval.

Recommendations of the final outcome of the grants will be made to the Chief Executive Officer of the relevant State/Territory volunteering peak body. The decision of the Chief Executive Officer will be final.

All applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application.

Feedback on individual applications will not be given.

### **Due diligence**

An assessment process will be undertaken to ensure the validity and eligibility of applications as part of the due diligence process.

### **Organisations that submit multiple applications**

Multiple funding applications received from the same organisation (i.e. autonomous branches/ sub-groups sharing the same ABN, within each State/ Territory) will be assessed based on the remaining funding available and the selection criteria. Where multiple applications are received from the same organisation, the application that rates highest will be considered first for the merit list for funding. Additional applications from that same organisation will only be considered if all funding has not been expended to individual organisations in that State/ Territory.

### **Financial Viability**

Applicants may be subject to a financial viability assessment. The financial viability assessment forms part of the risk mitigation strategy and can include:

- Establishing whether relevant persons have any adverse business history (e.g. current or past bankruptcy)
- Assessment of the financial health of an entity.

We will advise you if your organisation is subject to a financial viability assessment.

## **6. Successful grant applications**

Successful applicants will be notified by 25 November 2024 via email with an On-Funding Funding Agreement. Names of successful applicants will be published on the Volunteering Victoria website.

### **6.1 On-Funding Funding Agreement**

The On-Funding Funding Agreement will outline the eligible items approved for expenditure, as well as any reporting and financial acquittal obligations. Expenditure of grant funds must be made in line with the On-Funding Funding Agreement. A sample On-Funding Funding Agreement can be found [here](#).

### **6.2 How the grant will be paid**

The On-Funding Funding Agreement will state the maximum grant amount to be paid. This amount will not exceed the maximum grant amount (i.e. \$20,000) under any circumstances. If extra costs are incurred by the organisation receiving the grant, these remain the responsibility of that organisation.

If the organisation is seeking funding to contribute to a project that has multiple funding sources, this should be stated in the Expression of Interest and in the Application Form. Volunteering Victoria will not be responsible for reimbursement of any extra costs.

100 percent of the grant will be paid on execution of the grant agreement.

### 6.3 Reporting requirements

Successful Applicants will receive an On-Funded Funding Pack, this will include the following documents:

- On-funding Funding Agreement
- Child Safety Statement of Compliance Form
- Final Report Template
- Financial Acquittal Template

Examples of these templates will be sent to applicants with the invitation to apply.

## 7. Unsuccessful grant applications

Unsuccessful grant applications will be notified by 29 November 2024 in writing, via email of the outcome of their grant application.

## 8. Probity

The Volunteering Peak Bodies will be responsible for ensuring that the grant process is fair, according to published guidelines; incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct; and is consistent with the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs).

### 8.1 Enquiries and feedback

Complaints about this grant opportunity and/ or selection process may be made in writing to: Volunteering Victoria by email to [grants@volunteeringvictoria.org.au](mailto:grants@volunteeringvictoria.org.au). All complaints will be treated confidentially and investigated appropriately, including by an external party if required.

#### Escalated complaints

If you do not agree with the way Volunteering Victoria has handled your complaint, a third party may be involved to assist in resolving the complaint.

### 8.2 Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if DSS and the Community Grants Hub staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel has a:

- professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer or member of an external panel
- relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently

- relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program/ grant opportunity.

You will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interest or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later think there is an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform Volunteering Victoria in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be handled as set out in the [Australian Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)](#) of the [Public Service Act 1999](#). Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

Volunteering Victoria's [conflict of interest policy](#) will be shared with all successful grant recipients.

### 8.3 Privacy

We treat your personal information according to the [Privacy Act 1988](#) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- who we give your personal information to.

In submitting a grant application under this opportunity, you agree to Volunteering Victoria collecting your personal information, including your name, contact details and role in your organisation, in order to assess your application and for the purpose of grants administration.

If you do not provide this information, we cannot assess your grant application.

We may share the information you give us in your application, including personal information, with the nominated personnel such as the selection panel and Department of Social Services.

As part of your application, you also declare your ability to comply with the Privacy Act 1988 and the Australian Privacy Principles and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and subcontractors that you engage to assist with the activity, in respect of personal information you collect, use, store, or disclose in connection with the activity.

### 8.4 Confidential information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to give out to any person, other than Volunteering Victoria any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may, at any time, require you to arrange for you, or your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will keep any information in connection with the grant agreement confidential to the extent that it meets all of the 3 conditions below:

- You clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential.
- The information is commercially sensitive.
- Revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

- Volunteering Victoria employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively
- Employees and contractors of Volunteering Victoria so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
- The Department of Social Services

The grant agreement may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the grant agreement.

## 8.5 Freedom of information

All documents that the Australian Government has, including those about this grant opportunity, are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act gives people the ability to get information held by the Australian Government and its organisations. Under the FOI Act, people can ask for documents the Australian Government has. People may not be able to get these documents if these documents need to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons who the information relates to.

All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

By mail:           Freedom of Information Team  
                           Government and Executive Services Branch  
                           Department of Social Services (DSS) GPO Box 9820  
                           Canberra ACT 2601

By email:         [foi@dss.gov.au](mailto:foi@dss.gov.au)

## 9. Commonwealth Child Safe Framework

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse highlighted the need for organisations to adopt child safe practices including appropriate screening of staff, mandatory reporting and adoption of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. The Australian Government committed to a new Commonwealth-wide framework to protect children and young people it is responsible for – the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework (CCSF).

The Australian Government has put in place ways to apply certain child safety requirements of the CCSF to grantees. See above Section 2.4. The relevant child safety clause will be included in On-Funded Funding documentation.

If the proposed activity involves direct interaction with children, or children will be somehow involved in the activity, then a CB9 Child Safe Statement of Compliance will need to be completed. If the proposed activity does not include direct contact with children a G8A Child Safe Statement of Compliance will need to be completed.

Details on the specific child safe eligibility criteria can be found on the [Child Safety for DSS grants](#)<sup>[1]</sup> webpage and the supporting [Frequently Asked Questions for DSS Grantees](#)<sup>[2]</sup>.

G8A and CB9 Child Safe Statements of Compliance can be found [here](#).

## 10. National Agreement on Closing the Gap

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap (National Agreement) objective is to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments to work together to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and achieve life outcomes equal to all Australians. The National Agreement is underpinned by the belief that when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a genuine say in the design and delivery of policies, program and services that affect them, better life outcomes are achieved.

The National Agreement has been built around four Priority Reforms, these reforms recognise the voices and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and are central to the National Agreement. The aim of the Priority Reforms is to change the way governments work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to achieve the socio-economic targets outlined in the National Agreement.

The Priority Reforms are:

- Formal partnerships and shared decision-making
- Building the community controlled sector
- Transforming government organisations
- Shared access to data and information at a regional level.

The Department encourages grantees to work towards having a deep understanding of the Priority Reforms and how embedding them into the way services are designed and delivered will actively contribute to the Closing the Gap targets. This includes considering how to engage in genuine partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Grantees are required to ensure their services are culturally safe and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## 11. Indigenous organisation type classifications

All Australian governments are working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their communities, organisations and businesses to implement the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (National Agreement) at the national, state and territory, and local levels. The National Agreement identifies four (4) priority areas for reform within government. One of these is Priority Reform 2, building the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector to deliver services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

To assist government with improving and reporting on the level of community grant funding going to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, changes have been made to the way organisation data is collected. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations will now be classified into 3 tiers

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[1] <https://www.dss.gov.au/doing-business-with-dss/child-safety-for-dss-grants>

[2] <https://www.dss.gov.au/doing-business-with-dss-child-safety-for-dss-grants/frequently-asked-questions-for-dss-grantees>

and asked to self-identify which group they fall under. The three (3) tiers and their definitions are:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled organisation	These are organisations that are incorporated, not for profit, at least 51% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned and at least 51% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled (Board members or equivalent).
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Operated and Controlled organisation	These are organisations that are at least 51% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned and at least 51% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled (Board members or equivalent).
Other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation	These are organisations that are at least 50% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned OR at least 50% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled (Board members or equivalent).

## 12. Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

Whilst you are required to be compliant with all relevant laws and regulations, you may be requested to demonstrate compliance with the following legislation/policies/industry standards:

- Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 reporting requirements.

You may need to declare you can meet these requirements in your grant agreement with the Commonwealth.

## 13. Multicultural Access and Equity

The Australian Government's *Multicultural Access and Equity Policy* obliges Australian government agencies to ensure their policies, programs and services - including those provided by contractors and service delivery partners - are accessible to, and deliver equitable outcomes for, people from multicultural communities.

Grant applicants should consider how they will ensure their services will be accessible to people from multicultural communities. For example, service delivery partners may require cultural competency skills. In addition, services, projects, activities or events may require the use of professional translating or interpreting services in order to communicate with clients who have limited English proficiency.

## 14. Grant evaluation

The Department will evaluate this grant to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. The State and Territory peak bodies will also report on impacts and outcomes.