

# Connecting Seniors

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## Grant Program Guidelines

September 2023



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## Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Communities and Justice acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live. We celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contributed to the development of this guide.

We advise this resource may contain images, or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

Connecting Seniors

Published by Department of Communities and Justice

[dcj.nsw.gov.au](https://dcj.nsw.gov.au)

First published: September 2023

### **Acknowledgement**

A special acknowledgment to the Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing for their guidance, unwavering support and contributions towards the development of the Connecting Seniors Grant Program.

### **Copyright and disclaimer**

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# Contents

1	Department of Communities and Justice Grant Program Guidelines.....	1
1.1	Connecting Seniors Grant Program Guidelines .....	1
1.2	Overview of the Connecting Seniors Grant Program .....	1
1.3	Funding amounts.....	3
1.4	Grants funds expenditure .....	5
1.5	Grants funds exclusions.....	5
1.6	Application process.....	5
1.7	Summary of assessment process.....	5
1.8	Subcontracting information .....	6
1.9	NSW National Redress Scheme sanctions.....	6
1.10	COVID-19.....	6
1.11	Insurance .....	6
1.12	Banking details .....	7
1.13	Successful applicants – Grant Funding Agreement.....	7
1.14	Successful applicants’ obligations and reporting.....	7
1.15	Timeframes.....	8

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# 1 Department of Communities and Justice Grant Program Guidelines

The purpose of the Grant Program Guidelines is to provide potential applicants with an overview of the grant, the application and assessment process, and the performance, monitoring and reporting requirements.

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## 1.1 Connecting Seniors Grant Program Guidelines

The Connecting Seniors Grant Program Guidelines contain information to assist potential applicants to complete the application. It includes an overview of the Connecting Seniors grant program, information about the application process, eligibility and assessment criteria, how the funds can and cannot be used, and reporting requirements.

It is recommended that these guidelines are read prior to completing your application for the Connecting Seniors grant program.

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## 1.2 Overview of the Connecting Seniors Grant Program

### Purpose of the Connecting Seniors Grant Program

The NSW Government is committed to investing \$600,000 in projects and initiatives under the Connecting Seniors grant program that support the vision that all people in NSW experience the benefits of living longer and enjoy opportunities to participate, contribute to and be included in their communities.

The Connecting Seniors grant program aims to deliver a program to support older people to connect with others and address the challenges that contribute to isolation for older people 65 years and over and 50 years and over for Aboriginal people. The grant program is identified as an action under [Priority Area 3: Participating in Inclusive Communities in the Ageing Well in NSW: Seniors Strategy 2021-2031.](#)

### Objectives & outcomes

The program aims to build social connections and reduce isolation for older people, including those aged 65 years and over, or 50 years and over for Aboriginal people.

The objectives of the Connecting Seniors grant program are to:

- provide meaningful and lasting social connections
- help older people connect with each other in small group activities in person
- enable older people to develop lasting quality relationships
- engage new people, particularly harder-to-reach older people.

## Target group

The target group for the Connecting Seniors grant program is aligned with the [Ageing Well in NSW: Seniors Strategy 2021 – 2031](#) and must include older people who are considered at higher risk of isolation.

## Eligibility Criteria

Connecting Seniors grant program - applications must be from:

- Incorporated not-for-profit communication organisations.
- Other organisations or government agencies that are formally partnering with a not-for-profit organisation.
- Other, as determined by the policy / program area, e.g., NSW local council operating under the Local Government Act 1993 NSW.
- NSW local council operating under the Local Government Act 1993.

For the purposes of this grant program, ‘incorporated not-for-profit community organisations’ include:

- incorporated organisations that are registered and approved as not-for-profit bodies by NSW Fair Trading.
- not-for profit companies limited by guarantee, registered in NSW (must have ACNC registration and/or DGR status).
- associations (registered under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 with NSW Fair Trading).
- NSW Local Aboriginal Land Councils.
- religious organisations operating in NSW.

NSW non-government organisations established under an Act of Parliament. Incorporated not-for-profit bodies are organisations that are registered and approved as not-for-profit bodies by NSW Fair Trading.

Applications will not be accepted from organisations that have outstanding acquittals with DCJ.

**Note:** For more information and details about who is eligible to apply, please refer to the Connecting Seniors grant program [FAQ 's](#) and [DCJ Grants](#).

## Assessment criteria

Eligible organisations are invited to apply against the following assessment criteria.

- 1. Relevance** – the project is relevant to the objectives of the grant program and the demonstrated needs of target groups in local communities; achieved through engaging older people, particularly new and harder-to-reach older people.
- 2. Impact** – the project will deliver tangible, positive and clearly articulated outcomes. Must provide proof of previous and current impact with lasting social connections.
- 3. Implementation** – the applicant demonstrates the appropriate skills and expertise to deliver the project on time and on budget to attract and sustain participation.

## Prioritisation

A focus for this grant is on older people from the following priority groups due to these groups being considered at higher risk of social isolation:

- Aboriginal people aged 50 years and over
- culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD)
- lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or asexual (LGBTIQA+)
- living with disability, dementia, chronic disease, or mental illness
- carers
- people in rural, regional, and remote areas.

Applications may also be prioritised geographically to ensure an equitable spread of funds and projects across NSW. Applicants must not have outstanding acquittals for any other funding program with DCJ.

## Assessment:

Applications will be assessed against eligibility, prioritisation, and assessment criteria. An Assessment Panel will assess the applications and make recommendations to the panel that will include one independent member.

The panel will make a recommendation to the Minister for Seniors to consider the recommendations.

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## 1.3 Funding amounts

One off funding amounts will be available under three categories totalling to \$600,000 for this program, including:

- **Category 1:** Creation grants - are for new innovative projects, with \$20,000 to five innovative projects with an overall value of \$100,000. Local Councils are restricted from applying.
- **Category 2:** Enhancement and/or expansion grants - target known projects that work, with \$30,000 each for ten different organisations with an overall value of \$300,000. Local Councils are restricted from applying.
- **Category 3:** Local council grants - are available to local councils, with \$40,000 to five different councils with an overall value of \$200,000.

### Category 1 - Creation grants

Targets the creation of innovative projects valued at \$100,000 with five successful recipients receiving \$20,000 each.

#### Aim:

Create a new innovative short-term program that fosters social inclusion, builds social connections and targets older people and advances the Ageing Well in NSW: Seniors Strategy 2021-2031

Improve opportunities for older people to engage and connect with their communities, through innovative projects.

*Examples:*

- an Aboriginal organisation facilitating a new exercise and movement class for older Aboriginal people where participants undertake weekly seated non-strenuous exercise, followed by a brain stimulation activity and unlimited social interaction at the local cafe.
- a community based social engagement project, designed to build social connections and opportunities for volunteering so they are matched to programs aligned with their skill set and experience within the organisation.

**Category 2 - Enhancement and/or expansion grants**

Targets the enhancement or expansion of known projects that work, with \$300,000 in grants to ten successful recipients receiving \$30,000 each.

**Aim:**

Enhance a successful program that fosters social inclusion, builds social connections to target older people aged 65 years and over, or 50 years and over for Aboriginal people.

Expand a successful program that fosters social inclusion which is targeted to older people in a new geographical area or a new cohort (for example, rural and remote areas, CALD or LGBTQIA+).

Enhance or expand projects that can successfully start delivery as soon as the grant is provided, minimising long set up times and be delivered in full in 12 months.

**Examples:**

- a yarnning group in the Aboriginal community seeks funding to visit older people who are house bound, with the assistance of a local community transport provider.
- a community group that runs a regular movie appreciation night for seniors seeks funding to set up a Bollywood movie club in partnership with a local CALD organisation.

**Category 3 - Local council grants only**

This is only available to local councils; valued at \$200,000 with five successful recipients receiving \$40,000 each.

**Aim:**

Support local councils who have the knowledge, skills, resources and capacity to work in this area.

For local councils with professional expertise, who have capacity and are well-placed to understand community need and generate positive outcomes for older people.

**Examples:**

- a council partners with a digital literacy mentoring program for isolated seniors from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The council delivers digital literacy workshops through community centres in multiple priority locations.
- a council hosts a series of monthly events; with an emphasis on recreation, education, and wellbeing, in different locations across the LGA, that encourage people to get to know other Seniors, their neighbours and their community by trying something new.

**Note:** For more information and details about funding categories, please refer to the Connecting Seniors grant program [FAQ's](#) and [DCJ Grants](#).

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## 1.4 Grants funds expenditure

Funds can only be used for expenses/activities directly associated to the grant. Your application must clearly outline your proposed expenditure in relation to the funding amounts identified above and included in the budget you submit with your application.

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## 1.5 Grants funds exclusions

The following will not be considered eligible for funding:

- Project costs that area already the subject of another government grant, subsidy or financial assistance
  - Any activity of a commercial nature that is for profit
  - Existing debt or budget deficits
  - Capital works, including building work
  - Permanent salaries/wages (costs for temporary tutors/instructors for your program or activity can be included)
  - Permanent equipment purchases, for example tables and computers
  - Business as usual costs or general operating expenses
  - Programs or activities that encourage gambling such as bingo, or the consumption of alcohol
  - Programs and activities coordinated by NSW Government Departments and Statutory Authorities
  - Interstate or overseas travel costs
  - The same project twice. For example, two different organisations cannot apply for funds for the same program or activity
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## 1.6 Application process

- All applications must be submitted online via Smarty Grants portal.
  - Applications will open 25 September 2023; and close 5pm on 25 October 2023.
  - Applications will initially be reviewed by DCJ for general program compliance, and then assessed.
  - Applicants will be formally notified in December 2023 if their application has been successful or unsuccessful. Applicants must ensure their contact details are up to date.
  - Applicants must not have any outstanding acquittals for any other funding program with DCJ.
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## 1.7 Summary of assessment process

Applications will be reviewed by the eligibility team for eligibility and compliance with guidelines and eligible criteria. They will then be subject to the assessment process which will include assessment by the Assessment Team and Assessment Panel.

The Minister for Seniors is the decision-maker and has delegated the Deputy Secretary of DCJ as final approver under the schedule of delegations.

Applicants will be formally notified on whether their application has been successful. It is an applicant's responsibility to ensure all contact details are up to date.



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## 1.8 Subcontracting information

DCJ will only provide a grant to a single organisation. Organisations can work together through one lead organisation using subcontracting arrangements between them.

For more information about subcontracting please refer to the Connecting Seniors grant program [FAQ's](#) and the DCJ [subcontracting](#) policy.

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## 1.9 NSW National Redress Scheme sanctions

The NSW Government will not award a Grant Funding Arrangement to a non-government organisation with Redress Obligation (or to any of its Related Entities) if that non-government organisation:

- has declined to join the Scheme, or
- at the expiry of six months after the time it is notified to join the Scheme, has failed to do so.

[Visit the website](#) for further information about the [NSW National Redress Scheme](#) sanctions.

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## 1.10 COVID-19

Projects must adhere to NSW Government public health orders and advice in regard to COVID-19. Up-to-date information is available on the [NSW Government COVID-19 website](#).

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## 1.11 Insurance

Grant recipients must maintain current and adequate insurance appropriate to the activities/services funded under this grant to cover any liability of the grant recipient that might arise in connection with the performance of its obligations under a Grant Funding Agreement. This must include but is not limited to a minimum of \$10 million Public Liability Insurance.

Applicants may be asked to provide a copy of all relevant insurance policies and certificates in the application form.

You must provide evidence of the above insurance for an amount recommended by a professional insurance adviser, or any such other insurance policies as may reasonably be required by DCJ, and as required by law, for you and any of your employees or sub-contractors, in relation to the performance of the services.

If your organisation is not covered by the appropriate insurance, you will need to approach another organisation (such as your local council or an incorporated not-for-profit) to sponsor your application so that your project will be covered under their insurance.

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## 1.12 Banking details

It is your responsibility as the applicant to provide correct banking details, including the authorised signature to verify your bank details in the application form. Funds transferred to an incorrect bank account may not be recoverable.

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## 1.13 Successful applicants – Grant Funding Agreement

The application, Grant Funding Agreement and acquittal for the grant will be managed using the SmartyGrants management system and DocuSign.

Successful applicants are required to return the signed Grant Funding Agreement within two weeks of receipt.

Agreements can only be signed by authorised officers of your organisation. This may be a member of the executive/committee as deemed under the Articles of Association or Constitution for a not-for-profit organisation, or the General Manager or delegated officer if you are a council.

Please note, all applicants must provide the contact details (email address, phone number, name and position) of the relevant authorised signatories, or their delegates, in their application form.

It is the applicants' responsibility to ensure staff availability to complete and sign documents, to carefully read the terms and conditions of the Grant Funding Agreement, and to sign the Grant Funding Agreement using the correct authorised signatories.

Once we receive your signed Grant Funding Agreement via DocuSign, DCJ will countersign the agreement and return to you by email.

Any **variations** to the Grant Funding Agreement, including scope, location or time frames outlined in the application form and Grant Program Guidelines must be formally requested and approved in writing. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of the grant offer.

To discuss a variation, please contact the Seniors Team by email [Seniors@facs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Seniors@facs.nsw.gov.au)

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## 1.14 Successful applicants' obligations and reporting

- Any variations to the approved project scope, project location and completion time frames outlined in the original application form must be formally requested and approved in writing before any related work takes place.
- To discuss a variation, please contact the Seniors team by email [Seniors@facs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Seniors@facs.nsw.gov.au)
- All projects must be completed by 31 January 2025. You are required to submit a Final Report and Financial Acquittal in SmartyGrants no later than 28 February 2025. DCJ will send you the final acquittal form prior the required date that you will need to complete in the SmartyGrants portal.
- All projects will be required to provide DCJ with a mid-term report via SmartyGrants templates.
- Organisations are to ask their participants to complete a DCJ standardised questionnaire before and after the program to assess the impact of the program on participants. All survey responses will be anonymous and confidential.

- Please note that any photographs or videos containing images of participants and/or staff submitted in the Final Completion Report must be accompanied by a signed DCJ still and moving images consent form.
- DCJ would like the opportunity to promote project outcomes, achievements, and case studies on the DCJ and NSW Government website, social media and other platforms. Consent will be obtained from the organisation and their participants before information is publicly shared.
- It is a requirement that all financial records related to grant expenditure and acquittal be retained by the committee of the organisation for seven years. If the committee changes, these documents must be forwarded to the new incoming committee.

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## 1.15 Timeframes

Date	Event/Action
25 September 2023	Grant applications open
25 October 2023	Grant applications close
October/November 2023	Assessment of grant applications
December 2023	Advice to all applicants
December 2023	Public announcement by Minister
December 2023	Contract with successful applicants and project payment
December 2023	Grant program results published
January 2024	Projects commence
31 January 2025	Projects end
28 February 2025	Final Report and Financial Acquittal due to DCJ

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