Communities and Justice

Carers Investment Grant Program

Frequently Asked Questions ‘FAQs’

August 2024

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 emerging and acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contributed to the development of this document.

We advise this resource may contain images, or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

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# Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) Grant Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

## Introduction

This document is designed to respond to the most asked questions regarding the Carers Investment Grant Program. This document has been developed to help potential applicants completing and submitting grant applications.

**This FAQ document should be read together with the Carers Investment Grant Program Guidelines**.

## Grant program

The Carers Investment Grant Program will fund two-year projects to be delivered from April 2025 to end April 2027 with funding totalling $3.122 million.

Funded projects will have an education and training approach, enabling key service providers and professionals to better identify and support carers, and reach more carers across NSW.

## FAQ topics and questions

These FAQs and are intended to accompany the Carers Investment Grant Guidelines. Questions and answers below are grouped in the following topics.

* Overview of the grant
* [What grant funds can be used for](#_Toc108394619)
* Two stage application process
* Completing the application
* [Assessment](#_Toc108394641)
* Other requirements
* [After applications close](#_Toc108394652)

## Overview of the grant

**Q: Definition - Carers**

A: Carers provide ongoing and unpaid personal care, support and assistance to people who need help because of disability, mental illness, chronic or life-limiting illness, frail and aged.

**Q: What is the Carers Investment Grant Program?**

A: The grant program will fund two-year projects that have a systemic training and education approach, enabling key service providers to better identify and support carers, and reach more carers across NSW.

**Q: What are the aims and objectives of the Program?**

A: The objective of the grant program is to fund initiatives that develop, pilot and implement ongoing education and training programs for service providers to better identify and reach unidentified carers and provide them with information about how to get support.

The grant program will fund detailed projects that focus on training and educating service providers and professionals, (such as medical and mental health staff, allied health workers, dentists, teachers and principals, as well as government agency staff in direct contact with carers) about the role of carers and how to identify them, about carer rights, providing referrals to available supports, and the benefits of including carers as partners in care.

**Q: What kind of organisations are eligible to apply?**

A: The grant program will be open to:

* government human service agencies
* Incorporated not-for-profit community organisations
* NSW local councils operating under the Local Government Act 1993
* Peak organisations representing carers
* Representative organisations for GPs, other medical practitioners, allied health workers and pharmacists
* other representative organisations for relevant service providers.

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)
* Indigenous Corporations (must be registered with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations)
* NSW Local Aboriginal Land Councils
* religious organisations operating in NSW
* NSW non-government organisations established under their own Act of Parliament.

Health and education institutions (including universities) with a research focus do not meet the eligibility criteria for this grant program.

**Q: Can not-for-profit groups make a joint application?**

A: This will be determined on a case-by-case basis; if yes, an application must be made by a single organisation that will accept responsibility for the delivery of the project, if the application is successful.

**Q: What are the funding amounts we can apply for?**

A: One-off, time limited funding will be available ranging from $250,000 to $500,000 (excl GST) in total, for two-year projects to be delivered over the period April 2025 – end April 2027.

Funding will be paid to grant recipients in two equal instalments in March 2025 and March 2026, with the latter payment contingent on satisfactory performance and reporting.

**Q: Does the program include funding categories?**

A: No

## What grant funds can be used for

**Q: What can we use the grant funds for?**

A: Funds can only be used for expenses/activities directly associated with the project. The application must clearly outline your proposed expenditure in the budget you submit with your application.

**Q: What are we not allowed to spend grant funding on?**

A: Organisations must not use the money provided for the project, nor any interest earned on the money, for any other purpose beyond what is specified in the approved project description.

Items or activities that funding cannot be used for include:

* project costs that are already the subject of another government grant, subsidy or financial assistance
* project costs incurred prior to an application being submitted (no retrospective funding will be awarded)
* permanent salaries/wages
(except: costs for temporary staff for your project or event can be included;
an existing staff member to work additional hours/days to work on the project)
* an existing staff member assigned to the project and working the same hours as before however, their prior duties have been significantly reduced to match the time now devoted to the project. In this case, DCJ may require written evidence that these duties have changed (in the form of copies of old and new position descriptions)
* any activity of a commercial nature that is for-profit
* capital works including building work
* permanent equipment purchases, for example, tablets and computers
* business as usual costs or general operating expenses
* programs and activities that encourage gambling such as bingo, or the consumption of alcohol
* interstate or overseas travel costs
* the same program or activity twice. For example, two different organisations cannot apply for funds for the same program or activity.

**Q: Can we receive funding if we’ve already received an insurance payment, government grant or government funding?**

A: No

**Q: Can we apply for a project that has already started?**

A: Grant funds are not available for projects already in progress at the beginning of the application process.

**Q: What is subcontracting?**

A: For the purposes of these grants subcontracting refers to an arrangement between your organisation and one or more other organisations/individuals to assist your organisation to provide services funded through your grant.

A subcontracting arrangement requires the eligible organisation to enter into an agreement with the subcontractor to conduct the work, but the applicant (lead) organisation will retain the contractual obligations to DCJ under the Grant Funding Agreement for delivery and accountability. For this reason, it’s important you carry out the necessary due diligence before entering into such an agreement and applying for a grant on one or more subcontractors’ behalf.

Grantees are required to submit a request to DCJ for assessment prior to any subcontracting arrangement. Subcontractors cannot be utilised for any part or all the services without prior written consent from the DCJ.

For further information please refer to the DCJ [subcontracting](https://dcj.nsw.gov.au/service-providers/working-with-us/contract-management-policies-resources/subcontracting.html) policy.

## Two stage application process

**Q: What information is required in the Expression of Interest (Stage 1) application process?**

A: To complete this stage you will need to:

* Provide a broad outline of your initiative
* Address the grant program objectives
* Outline who will participate in the project
* Detail your track record in similar projects
* Request a specific grant funding amount to deliver the project.

EOIs will initially be reviewed by DCJ for general program compliance and applicant eligibility. Those found compliant and eligible will then be invited to make a full application.

**Q: What information is required in the Application (Stage 2) process? (invitation only)**

A: The application will need to provide more detail on how your project will provide a specific outcome to carers, including:

* More detail about your proposed project, particularly around the evidence supporting your idea, the proposed outcomes and how you will measure success.
* Budget – total and detailed breakdown
* Project plan – detailed plan and key milestones
* Governance arrangements for the project
* Detailed risk plan – key risks and mitigations and process for managing project risks

## Completing the application

**Q: Do I have to use SmartyGrants to apply?**

A: Yes, applications for this program will only be accepted that are submitted via the SmartyGrants platform.

**Q: Can I review the application form before starting my application?**

A: Yes, when you log on to SmartyGrants and view the application you can also choose to download as a PDF to review whenever you like. You can also preview the form online. Please note that PDF copies of application forms do not show which questions are conditional, so you may see questions that do or do not apply to your organisation.

**Q: Can I provide letters of support or references to support my application?**

A: No, only your application form and any documents requested and submitted through the form on SmartyGrants will be considered.

**Q: Is there support available to help me apply or answer questions?**

A: The DCJ Grant Design and Support team can assist organisations with any queries regarding the application process. Organisations can contact the Grant Design and Support team at GrantDesignandSupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au.

Please quote your Application ID in all correspondence. If you are not familiar with the SmartyGrants management system, please refer to the SmartyGrants Help Guide for Applicants or their general help page. You can also contact SmartyGrants directly if you are having technical difficulties with the application form or your SmartyGrants account/password, for contact details visit their help page.

**Q: Can we submit more than one application?**

A: Yes, however you would need to effectively demonstrate how each project was different and how it would educate a different group of targeted providers and or professionals in direct contact with carers.

**Q. What is the difference between an ACCO and other organisations that serve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?**

A: Please refer to our page on [Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs)](https://dcj.nsw.gov.au/service-providers/working-with-us/how-we-work-with-you/aboriginal-community-controlled-organisations.html), which also provides information on our commitment to building the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector.

**Q. Should we include GST in our application?**

A: Your funding request should exclude any GST that you will be charged by contractors or suppliers as part of the cost/delivery. If your application is successful and your organisation’s ABN is registered for GST, you will be paid GST on top of the approved grant amount. If your organisation ABN is not registered for GST or you do not have an ABN, you will only be paid the approved grant amount.

**Q: Who needs to sign off on our application?**

A: The Applicant Declaration must be made by two of your organisation's authorised signatories, who will also be responsible for signing the Grant Funding Agreement via DocuSign should your application be successful More information on DCJ authorised signatories is available on the DCJ website. Please note, you must provide the contact details (email address, phone number, name and position) of the relevant authorised signatories, or their delegates, in your application form. Please contact grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au immediately if these details change.

**Q: Why would we want to provide the details of a third (optional) person in our Application form to view the Grant Funding Agreement?**

A: DCJ administers Grant Funding Agreements to successful organisations via DocuSign, which only allows those who receive an individualised link to access the document for viewing. Therefore, all of those who wish to either sign or view the Grant Funding Agreement must provide their contact details. You may wish to include any relevant legal or administrative staff to review a copy of the Grant Funding Agreement before it is signed.

**Q: Can value-in-kind be considered as funding contributed by a not-for-profit organisation?**

A: Yes. Donated materials and contributions by paid staff and volunteers of the organisation are allowed as part of the not-for-profit organisation’s contribution to the cost of a project. The estimated value of these contributions should be provided in the project budget.

**Q: Is it too late to apply?**

A: Applications that are late or incorrectly filled out or incomplete will not be accepted.

**Q: We completed an eligibility Expression of Interest and received an invitation to apply, what now? How do we apply?**

A: In your invitation email you will find a private link to your application form on SmartyGrants. Each eligible applicant has their own individual link. You can log in to SmartyGrants using the same username and password that you used for your Expression of Interest (if you have forgotten there is a link on SmartyGrants to recover these details).

You are not required to complete your application in one sitting and can save and return at a later date to complete and submit. Once your application has been submitted you will receive an automated response from SmartyGrants. If you have not received this email, your application has not been successfully submitted, or the confirmation email has ended up in your junk mailbox.

You can also log in to the online system and click ‘My Submissions’ to view all submitted and unsubmitted applications. Submitted applications are identified by a green tick. Carefully check your application prior to submitting. If you realise that you have made an error once you have submitted your application please contact grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au for assistance before the closing date. Applications that are late or incorrectly filled out or incomplete will not be accepted.

## Assessment

**Q: What are the assessment criteria?**

A: Organisations that have been invited to submit an Application (Stage 2) should ensure that their applications meet the following assessment criteria to be considered for funding:

* meet the objective and scope of the grant program
* demonstrate value for money
* increase reach to a broader range of carers across NSW
* implement ongoing training and education programs
* draw support from and partner with other organisations and/or government agencies to directly reach the target group for training and education
* demonstrate capacity and capability of the applicant to deliver the project and ensure its ongoing benefits to carers.

All applications will be assessed against eligibility and assessment criteria by an assessment panel including one independent member. The panel will make a recommendation to the designated decision-maker, the Deputy Secretary, Strategy Policy and Commissioning, DCJ for determination.

**Q: Are there any funding priorities for the grants program?**

A: No. The grants program encourages a focus on benefitting the needs and diversity of all carers. Carers come from diverse backgrounds and can be found in all communities, of all ages, socio-economic groups and areas throughout NSW.

Projects may target or include the following specific cohorts depending on the service involved:

* Aboriginal people
* Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
* Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or asexual (LGBTIQA+)
* People living with disability, frail age or dementia, chronic, life-limiting or mental illness
* Those living in rural, regional and remote areas.
* Young carers
* Veterans.

Project applications may also be prioritised to ensure equitable geographic distribution across NSW to ensure an equitable spread of funds and projects.

## Other requirements

**Q: What insurance is my organisation required to maintain?**

A: Your organisation:

* is required to provide a valid Certificate of Currency for Public Liability Insurance with a minimum cover of $10 million in your organisation’s name, which you will upload as part of your application
* must retain any other insurance required under Commonwealth and NSW law for the performance of its activities funded by this grant, if successful
* is responsible for ensuring it has appropriate and current insurance coverage in place to cover any liability of the grant recipient that might arise in connection with the performance of its obligations under its Grant Funding Agreement, which includes activities carried out by any other individual or organisation that you may subcontract.

**Q: What is the NSW National Redress Scheme?**

A: The National Redress Scheme is part of the Commonwealth Government’s response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The National Redress Scheme provides support to people who experienced institutional child sexual abuse.

The Scheme:

* Acknowledges that many children were sexually abused in Australian institutions;
* Holds institutions accountable for this abuse; and
* Helps people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse gain access to counselling, a direct personal response, and a Redress payment.

The Scheme started on 1 July 2018 and will run for 10 years. The NSW Government will not award a grant 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.

For further information please visit the NSW National Redress Scheme Sanctions Policy webpage.

**Q: Where can I find out my responsibilities in relation to COVID-19?**

A: Please refer to the up-to-date information on current public health orders and advice on the NSW Government’s COVID-19 webpage. Due to the changing impacts of COVID-19 across NSW, it is the successful applicant’s responsibility to keep track of current NSW Government public health orders and advice, and adhere to them.

**Q: Do I need to provide banking details?**

A: Yes. It is your responsibility to provide the correct banking details, including the authorised signature to verify your bank details, in your application form. Funds transferred to an incorrect bank account may not be recoverable. This applies even if you have provided your banking details to DCJ in the past or are currently receiving other payments from DCJ.

**Q: Why should I keep my contact details up to date?**

A: Your application, Funding Agreement and acquittal for the grants will be managed using the SmartyGrants online grants administration system and DocuSign. We will contact you and your organisation’s authorised signatories using the details provided in your application on SmartyGrants.

It is the responsibility of the grant recipient to keep DCJ up to date with any change in contact information, including the contact details of authorised signatories. DCJ is not responsible for any consequences should your grant offer be withdrawn due to out-of-date contact details in SmartyGrants. Please email grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au to update contact details.

## After applications close

**Q: What happens when you receive my application?**

A: Applicants will be formally notified in **February 2025** if their Application (Stage 2) has been successful or unsuccessful. Applicants must ensure their contact details on SmartyGrants remain up to date.

**Q: Will the information in my application be kept confidential?**

A: Information received in applications and in respect of applications is treated as confidential, and all assessors will sign a confidentiality agreement before reviewing your application. However, documents in the possession of the government are subject to the provisions of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*. If you are successful, the NSW Government may share or publicise information on your program. An agreement that this may occur will form part of your Grants Funding Agreement].

**Q: When will I know if my application was successful?**

A: You will be notified via email in **February 2025** if your Application (Stage 2) has been successful. Applicants must ensure their contact details on SmartyGrants remain up to date.

**Q: If I’m successful, what happens then?**

A: You will be notified via email in **February 2025** and shortly after a Grant Funding Agreement will be sent via DocuSign to the authorised signatories, and any additional reviewers, as provided in your application form. Successful applicants are required to return the signed Funding Agreement within seven days of receipt.

Grant Funding 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 if you are a not-for-profit organisation. Please refer to the following for further details on authorised signatories and delegation. Please note, you must provide the contact details (email address, phone number, name and position) of the relevant authorised signatories, or their delegates, in your application form.

Please contact grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au immediately if these details change. It is your 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 Funding Agreement via DocuSign, your Grant Funding Agreement will be countersigned and sent to you by email.

**Q: What happens if situations change and we wish to change the details of our program after we receive funding?**

A: Any major variations to the approved purposes outlined in your original application form on SmartyGrants must be formally requested and approved in writing before any related work takes place, as your application form will form part of your legally binding Grant Funding Agreement with DCJ. Failure to do so may result in you being required to return the grant monies in full. To discuss a variation, please contact the Grants team by email grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au.

**Q: What reporting will be required?**

A: You will be required to complete:

* All projects must be completed by April 2027. You are required to submit a Final Report and Financial Acquittal in SmartyGrants no later than May 2027 (or within 30 days of completion of the project). DCJ will send you the Final Acquittal form prior to the required date that you will need to complete it in the SmartyGrants portal.
* Six monthly written project reports will be required and phone catch-ups may be also be conducted. Under your Grant Funding Agreement you will be required to respond to any other reasonable request for information on your project status and progress.
* 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](https://facs.smartygrants.com.au/s/site/facs/DCJ-still-and-moving-images-consent-form-event_-_%28FINAL%29.docx).
* 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.

**Q: What are the acquittals requirements?**

A: Successful applicants will be required to submit a simple financial acquittal by May 2027. The acquittal will include an expenditure breakdown on:

* Staffing costs
* Reimbursement
* Minor equipment and assets
* Operational costs
* Minor expenses for individuals

An officeholder in your organisation will be required to certify that the grant funds have been expended as per your financial acquittal.

**Q: Why was my application not successful?**

A: If your application is not successful, it does not mean your application is without merit. Funding is limited and not all applications are successful. Due to the high volume, DCJ is unable to provide individual feedback on each unsuccessful application.

Please note that all funding decisions are final, and you may not appeal the decision in relation to your application. Please ensure all details in your Registration of Interest and Application are correct at the time of submission.

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