

NSW Sexual Violence Recovery & Healing Grant Program

Guidelines

November 2025

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We advise this resource may contain images, or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

NSW Sexual Violence Recovery & Healing Grant Program

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1 Key Dates and Information

Grant applications open	27 October 2025
Grant applications close	12 December 2025
Application outcomes advised	March 2026
Project delivery timeframe	July 2026 – June 2028
Decision-maker	Deputy Secretary, Strategy Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice
NSW Government Agency	NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ)
Type of grant opportunity	Open, competitive
Total grant value	\$3 million
Program enquiries	SVRH.grants@dcj.nsw.gov.au
Technical enquiries	grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au

2 Overview

2.1 NSW Sexual Violence Recovery & Healing Grant Program Guidelines

The NSW Sexual Violence Recovery & Healing Grant Program (the SVRH Grant Program) Guidelines include an overview of the 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.

2.2 Program Context

The SVRH Grant Program is intended to support the delivery of actions outlined in the NSW Sexual Violence Plan 2022-2027 (the Plan), including two under the Recovery and Healing pillar and the commitment to explore the use of restorative justice in NSW. The Plan recognises that healing and recovering aims to minimise the impact of trauma, support recovery from trauma and promote long-term health and wellbeing. It also notes that it is vitally important that all victim-survivors of sexual violence in NSW can access culturally appropriate, trauma-informed and accessible support to help reduce the harmful impacts of sexual violence and support healing and recovery.

In this Grant Program, ‘sexual violence’ is used as an umbrella term to describe acts of a sexual nature that happen without consent. It includes acts that are criminal offences, such as sexual assault and child sexual abuse, and acts that are not criminal offences, for example sexual harassment in the form of unwanted comments and leering. Sexual violence not only comprises physical, but also non-physical acts and behaviours, such as image-based sexual abuse. It can range from a single instance of harassment or assault to abuse perpetrated over long periods.

The SVRH Grant Program also adopts an intersectional approach to sexual violence, acknowledging that every victim-survivor has a unique set of personal circumstances, experiences, backgrounds, and identities. These overlapping factors can expose individuals and communities to multiple forms of inequality, marginalisation, and discrimination. By recognising how sexual violence is shaped by these broader systemic issues, the program acknowledges that some people may experience higher rates or more severe forms of violence, as well as face additional barriers to seeking support, recovery, and healing.

Recovery and Healing

Healing and recovering from the trauma of sexual violence takes time and victim-survivors require support tailored to their needs and circumstances. The National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032 recognises recovery as an ongoing process that enables victim-survivors to be safe, healthy and resilient and to have economic security and post-traumatic growth. It relates to the rebuilding of a victim-survivor’s life, their ability to return to the workplace and community, as well as obtaining independence and economic security. It could also include opportunities which focus on repairing the harm caused, creating spaces for truth-telling, acknowledgement and emotional repair.

Acknowledging that victim-survivors recover and heal in different ways and considering that gender-based violence can involve multiple traumatic events, recovery and healing is multidimensional in nature and requires a multi-faceted response. Key components include addressing long term physical, mental, and emotional health, alongside psychosocial supports such as community connection, housing, economic and financial security, and justice responses, including those that are restorative. An intersectional approach is essential to ensure that support systems are culturally appropriate and effectively address structural, systemic and community barriers. (National Roundtable on Healing and Recovery from Domestic, Family, and Sexual Violence Report).

Building the capacity of communities and services to support recovery and healing is central to creating effective, sustainable and locally relevant approaches that are responsive to the diverse needs of victim-survivors. Building capacity involves strengthening knowledge, skills, attitudes,

processes and practices that underpin trauma-informed and culturally responsive support. A wide variety of strategies can be used to enhance community and service capacities, including, but not limited to, specialist training and workforce development; creation and dissemination of accessible informational and educational materials for different audiences; creation of tools, guidance and other resources; facilitation of inclusive, community-led processes, etc.

2.3 Program Purpose

The NSW and Australian Governments have committed a total of \$3 million in one-off, time-limited grant funding to support two-year projects under the SVRH Grant Program. Additional funding has also been provided to support its administration and evaluation.

The SVRH Grant Program is designed to fund community-based initiatives to build the capacity of communities and services to strengthen recovery and healing supports to meet the needs of victim-survivors of sexual violence from NSW priority groups (listed in section 2.6). It aims to fund projects across metro, rural and regional NSW with clear alignment to the grant objectives, the identified outcomes and with actionable delivery plans. Only projects that demonstrate clear adaptation to meet the needs of priority groups will be supported, including those not originally designed for these communities.

2.4 Program objectives

- Improve the capacity of communities and services across NSW to support the recovery and healing of victim-survivors of sexual violence from priority groups by strengthening trauma- and culturally informed practices.
- Improve collaboration and information sharing between communities and services delivering culturally and trauma-informed recovery and healing programs for victim-survivors from priority groups across NSW.

2.5 Expected outcomes

At the end of the two-year funding period, DCJ aims for the SVRH Grant Program to achieve:

1. **Knowledge and skills:** Communities and services demonstrate understanding of: (a) the diverse needs and long-term impacts of sexual violence on priority groups; (b) safe, inclusive culturally and trauma-informed approaches to recovery and healing, including the principles and application of restorative processes and practices; and (c) how to communicate and deliver recovery and healing supports that respond to the needs of diverse victim-survivors.
2. **Application:** Communities and services develop, adopt and apply evidence-informed capacity building activities and resources in their practices to support recovery and healing including the use of restorative principles and techniques.
3. **Continuous learning:** Grant recipients, communities and services benefit from the insights that emerge from the Grant Program, supporting continuous learning and practices improvement.

An interim program logic for the SVRH Grant Program is included at **Appendix A** of this document. This may be updated after grants are awarded.

2.6 Priority groups

The SVRH Grant Program will provide grants to support projects that focus on meeting the recovery and healing needs of victim-survivors of sexual violence from the following priority groups:

- Aboriginal communities
- multicultural communities
- LGBTIQ+ communities
- people with disability

- children and young people
- adult survivors of child sexual abuse
- older women
- people experiencing homelessness
- people in contact with the criminal justice system

The priority groups have been identified in the [NSW Sexual Violence Plan 2022-2027](#) and confirmed through a supporting evidence review.

2.7 Funding amounts

The total funding amount available under the SVRH Grant Program is \$3 million. One-off, time limited funding is available for two-year projects delivered through to 2027/28. There is no specific limit on the amount eligible applicants can apply for.

3 Eligibility Criteria

Proposals must meet both applicant eligibility criteria and project requirements to progress to assessment.

3.1 Applicant eligibility

All applicants are required to meet the following eligibility criteria:

- be an eligible legal entity located in NSW, including:
 - Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) – these Applicants may be required to provide documentation to support their ACCO status
 - Not-for-profit organisations will be considered eligible, if they are:
 - 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.
- additionally, all applicants must:
 - be able to enter into a grant funding agreement with NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ)
 - have an Australian bank account
 - have an Australian Business Number (ABN) or Australian Company Number (ACN) or Australian Incorporation Number (AIN).
 - have appropriate insurance; this must include but is not limited to a minimum of \$10 million Public Liability Insurance
 - address the NSW National Redress Scheme sanctions

- not have outstanding acquittals with DCJ.

3.1.1 National Redress Scheme

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.

3.2 Project requirements

All project proposals must meet the following requirements:

- **Project focus:** projects must primarily focus on capacity building to enhance existing practices and services aimed at supporting victim-survivors to heal and recover. The program will not fund activities focused on prevention, early intervention, or crisis response, nor will it support the establishment of new services or service delivery models.
- **Priority groups:** projects must focus on meeting the recovery and healing needs of victim-survivors of sexual violence from at least one of the identified priority groups:
 - Aboriginal communities
 - multicultural communities
 - LGBTIQ+ communities
 - people with disability
 - children and young people
 - adult survivors of child sexual violence
 - older women
 - people experiencing homelessness
 - people in contact with the criminal justice system
- **Geographic location:** projects must be delivered within the state of NSW only.

Additionally, projects must not include ineligible expenditure items, detailed under **5.4 Ineligible Grant Funding Expenditure**.

4 Assessment Criteria

Proposals that meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed and scored against the following assessment criteria:

Criteria	Sub-criteria
Demonstrated need	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrated understanding of local context, priority groups and needs.• Project to be evidence-based. Clear description of the capacity building need including any data on demographics, prevalence and location, as well as the proposed project to address the need.
Outcome and impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alignment to NSW Sexual Violence Recovery & Healing Grant Program expected outcomes as outlined in the draft Program Logic.• Strong link between demonstrated need and proposed project activities and outcomes.• Outcomes are clearly defined and achievable within the project period.• Project impacts and sustainability beyond the life of the funding are articulated.
Capacity to deliver	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrated experience supporting the healing and recovery needs of victim-survivors of gender-based violence, in particular sexual violence, and trauma-informed practice.• Demonstrated experience designing and delivering similar projects.• Clear and feasible project plan including key milestones and activities.• <i>For partnership applications: Partner roles identified and relevant to project outcomes.</i>
Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear, cost-effective budget based on reasonable cost estimates.
Risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrated awareness of potential risks to the project and how they will be addressed.

4.1 Prioritisation

The assessment process may prioritise equitable distribution of grants across priority groups. Applications may also be prioritised to ensure geographic distribution across NSW including an equitable spread of funds and projects in regional, rural and remote areas, and to avoid service duplication. Preference may be given to applications by ACCOs.

5 Applying for the SVRH Grant Program

5.1 Application process

All applications for the SVRH Grant Program are to be completed using the SmartyGrants portal, the DCJ online grants platform. No other form of submission will be accepted.

Applicants may only submit one project proposal.

Applicants must ensure they complete the application form in full and submit it prior to the closing date and time. All applications should demonstrate alignment to the SVRH Grant Program objectives and expected outcomes, address the specific needs of priority groups, and address recovery and healing from sexual violence.

Applicants must ensure that their contact details are up to date.

5.2 Subcontracting and partnerships

We recognise that some organisations may wish to collaborate to deliver projects under the SVRH Grant Program. There are two ways to work together: through subcontracting arrangements or partnerships.

Both require the appointment of a lead applicant organisation. The lead applicant is required to satisfy all the eligibility criteria. Only the lead applicant can submit the application form and enter into a grant funding agreement with DCJ. The lead applicant is accountable for the delivery of the project and intended outcomes, including all reporting.

Subcontracting involves formal financial arrangements between organisations. Please refer to the DCJ [subcontracting policy](#) if this applies to you.

Partnerships involve organisations working together collaboratively, without a formal financial arrangement between them. You will need to provide evidence of each partner's role in your application.

5.3 Eligible grant funding expenditure

Funds can only be used for expenses and activities directly associated to the grant. Your application must clearly outline your proposed expenditure.

Eligible costs may include:

- Technical and professional staff involved in delivery of the proposed project, including on-costs of lead applicants, and partner organisations in a temporary capacity for the length of the project
- Expenses related to design or publication of material and resources
- Advertising expenses
- Development costs such as licence fees for third party provider services used during the term of the project
- Travel, such as transport and accommodation, to deliver project components.

5.4 Ineligible grant funding expenditure

Organisations must use the grant funds, including any interest earned, for the purposes of the grant.

Items or activities that funding cannot be used for include:

- Establishing a new frontline service or expanding an existing service
- Primary prevention, early intervention and crisis response activities
- Medical or therapeutic treatments delivered within clinical or health funded settings, and focused on individual diagnosis or treatment

- Any activity of a commercial nature that is for profit
- Buying core business capital equipment such as office equipment, tables and computers
- Capital works, including building work
- Costs already approved through other funding sources
- Costs associated with attending or hosting conferences not directly related to the project
- Covering existing debts or budget deficits
- Business as usual service delivery, costs or general operating expenses
- Paying salaries and on-costs for temporary or ongoing staff not directly involved in the project
- Programs or activities that encourage gambling such as bingo, or the consumption of alcohol
- Projects not undertaken in NSW and not benefiting NSW communities
- Projects that duplicate existing services and initiatives without clear enhancement or adaptation for priority groups
- Retrospective activities, such as work already undertaken
- Interstate or overseas travel.

Applicants should not budget for expending funds on project-level evaluation, beyond time allocation of relevant personnel (see Section 9 Evaluation).

5.5 Late applications

Late submissions will not be considered or accepted unless in emergency or extreme circumstances where DCJ is satisfied that the integrity of the process has not been compromised and subject to probity advice. Please email us at SVRH.grants@dcj.nsw.gov.au with any queries. DCJ's decision on whether to accept requests for late submissions will be final.

6 Applicant support

6.1 Support and contact

You can contact the Program team at SVRH.grants@dcj.nsw.gov.au for help understanding the SVRH Grant Program Guidelines and submitting an application in a way that is accessible to you and your organisation.

You can contact Grant Design & Support at grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au for help accessing and navigating SmartyGrants.

6.2 Support and contact for ACCOs

As well as support from the Program and Grant Design & Support teams, ACCOs can contact DCJ's Aboriginal Commissioning team. The Aboriginal Commissioning team will be available to provide general support and advice.

Email: aboriginalcommissioning@dcj.nsw.gov.au

6.3 Information Session

DCJ will host an online Information Session to provide an overview of the Grant Program and to answer questions:

- date: Thursday 30 October 2025
- time: 11:00am – 11:45am
- attendance at an information session is not compulsory
- if you would like to attend, please email SVRH.grants@dcj.nsw.gov.au to RVSP, and the team will provide a meeting link
- slides presented at the session and an updated FAQ will be made available online.

7 Assessment Process

7.1 Summary of assessment process

This is an open and competitive grants program. All submissions will be assessed against the eligibility and assessment criteria following the process below:

- Eligibility Team assesses each application against applicant and project eligibility criteria.
- Assessment Team conducts assessment and scoring of eligible applications against published assessment criteria.
- Expert Assessment Panel reviews assessment and scoring, prioritises funding in accordance with published prioritisation where required, and makes recommendations to the DCJ Delegated Decision-Maker.
- DCJ Delegated Decision Maker considers the recommendations and makes the final decision.

7.2 Probity

Independent probity advisors have been appointed to provide guidance to DCJ on any probity issues that may arise through the application, assessment and decision-making process. This will ensure decisions are made with integrity, fairness and accountability, while delivering value for money for NSW.

7.3 Outcome notification

All applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application through their SmartyGrants portal and email notifications. Part funding may be offered where an application includes ineligible activities or budget items. It is an applicant's responsibility to ensure all contact details are up to date including authorised signatories with personalised email addresses.

7.4 Feedback on applications

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 applications, we are unable to provide individual feedback on each unsuccessful application.

8 Successful grant applications

8.1 Grant Funding Agreement

Successful applicants are required to:

- Enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with DCJ within two weeks of the grant offer being made.
- Start and complete funded activities and events within the dates specified in the Grant Funding Agreement.
- Acknowledge the support of the NSW Government in accordance with the Grant Funding Agreement.
- Seek approval from DCJ for any proposed changes to a funded activity prior to the proposed changes being made via a variation submission in SmartyGrants. Project variations may be accepted where the requested change aligns with the Program Guidelines and the original intent of the approved project.
- NOTE: no grant funding agreements will be accepted after 30 May 2026 due to end of financial year deadlines. If you do not return your grant agreement by this date your grant will be forfeited.

8.2 Grant payment

Payment will be made upfront upon return of the fully executed Grant Funding Agreement.

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. Generic email addresses for more than one contact cannot be accepted.

8.3 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 a minimum of \$10 million Public Liability Insurance.

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

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 via a subcontracting arrangement.

8.4 Publication of grant information

The NSW Grant Administration Guide requires that certain information is published in relation to grants awarded no later than 45 calendar days after the grant agreement takes effect (see section 6.5 of the Guide and Appendix A to the Guide). This information is also open access under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) (GIPA Act), which must be made publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.

In accordance with these requirements, relevant information about the grants awarded will be made available on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder within 45 days of payment.

All records in relation to this decision will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the State Records Act 1998 (NSW).

8.5 Reporting and acquittal requirements

Recipients will be required to:

- Submit six-monthly progress reports via the reporting template assigned in your SmartyGrants portal and attend progress meetings. Under your Grant Funding Agreement, you will be required to respond to any other reasonable request for information on your project status and progress.
- Agree that DCJ staff may meet virtually or visit in person, during or at the completion of your grant activity, to review your progress. We will seek your permission to visit, in accordance with local protocols, and provide you with reasonable notice of any visit.
- Complete a Final Report including financial acquittal within 4 weeks of project completion via your SmartyGrants portal.
- Note that any photographs or videos containing images of participants and/or staff submitted in final reporting must be accompanied by a signed DCJ still and moving images consent form.
- 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.
- Allow DCJ to inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant funding agreement.

8.6 Unspent project funds

If a grant recipient's project is completed and there are unspent project funds remaining, these must be returned to DCJ unless otherwise specified in the grant funding agreement if more than \$250.

Alternatively, the recipient may request a project extension to deliver the approved project, noting this may or may not be granted.

9 Evaluation

The SVRH Grant Program will be independently evaluated. This evaluation will document outcomes from the SVRH Grant Program as well as capturing lessons and insights from across the projects, with the intention of contributing to the evidence base for effective sexual violence recovery and healing initiatives.

An external evaluator will be appointed to evaluate the program. Grant holders will contribute to the independent evaluation process via data collection and input and also receive support in the design and evaluation aspects of their project. Grant holders should not budget for expending funds on project-level evaluation, beyond time allocation of relevant personnel.

Applicants should factor in time to:

- develop an evaluation plan for their project
- share project data with the independent evaluator at regular intervals through the project period as part of a continuous improvement process (frequency to be determined)
- participate in the sharing of findings with other grant holders throughout the project period (process to be determined).

In the event that evaluation requires endorsement of a Human Research Ethics Committee, including an appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Ethics Committee, this process will be managed by the external evaluator with input from the grant holders.

The Program Logic for the SVRH Grant Program is attached to the Guidelines (Appendix A).

10 Additional information

10.1 Complaint handling

Any complaints should be sent in writing to SVRH.grants@dcj.nsw.gov.au.

10.2 Access to information

Note that documents submitted as part of a grant application may be subject to an application under the GIPA Act or an order for papers under Standing Order 52.

The GIPA Act provides for the proactive release of government information by agencies and gives members of the public an enforceable right to access government information held by an agency (which includes Ministerial offices). Access to government information is only to be restricted if there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

Before information is released in response to an application under the GIPA Act, there will be an assessment of the public interest considerations in favour of and against disclosure of that information, and there may be consultation requirements that apply.

The NSW Legislative Council has the power to order the production of State papers by the Executive Government. Standing Order 52 provides that the House may order documents to be tabled by the Government in the House. The Cabinet Office coordinates the preparation of the papers – that is, the return to order. The return to order may contain privileged and public documents. Privileged documents are available only to members of the Legislative Council.

10.3 Ethical conduct

10.3.1 Conflict of interest management

Conflicts of Interest between DCJ and applicants will be managed in accordance with the DCJ's code of conduct, and declarations are made and recorded by all persons involved in performing functions related to the assessment process.

10.3.2 Confidentiality

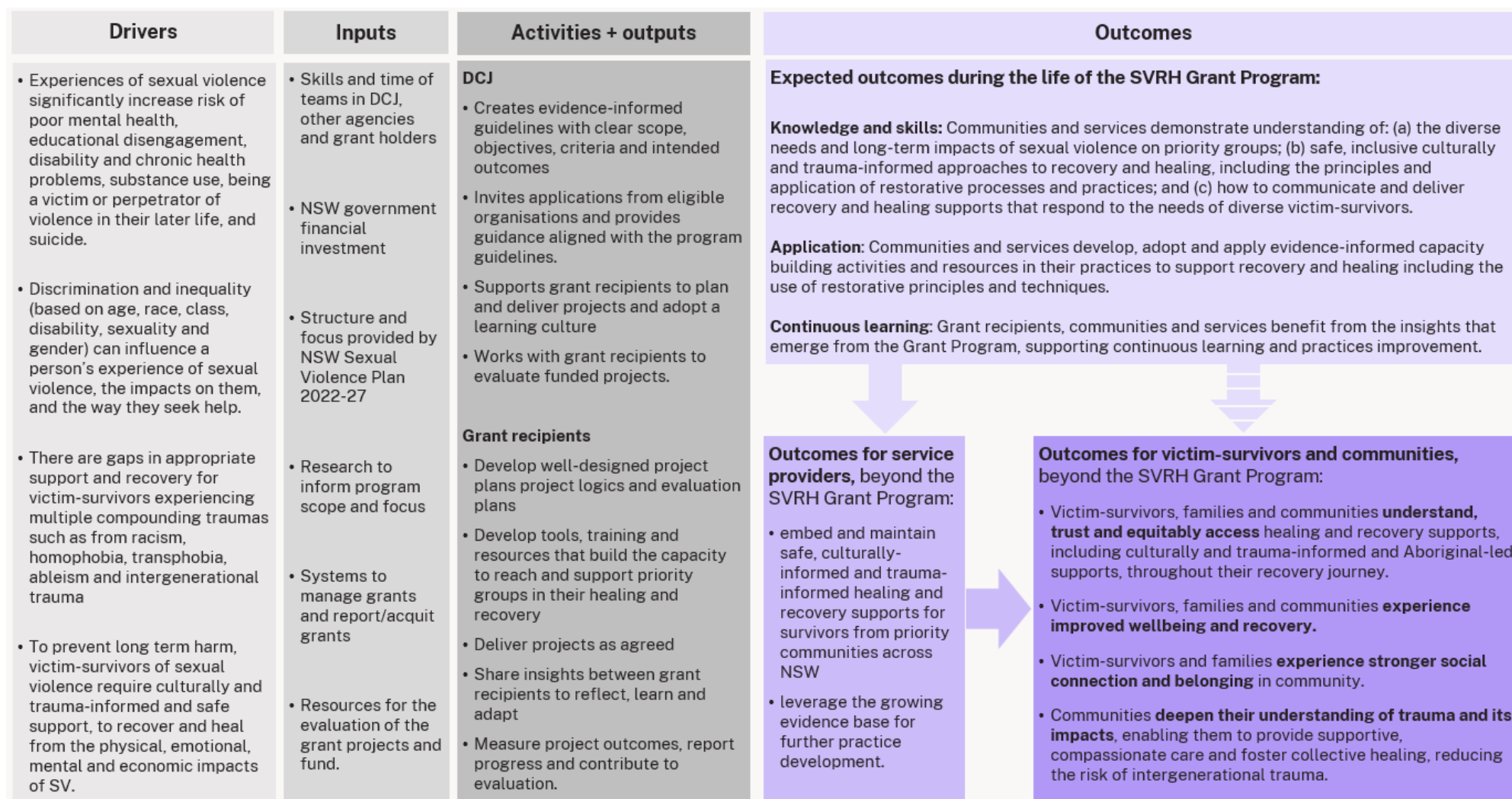
Information relating to the successful applications, including the name of the applicant, description of the funded project and the funding amount, will be included in:

- Public media releases.
- An announcement on the DCJ website.
- The NSW Grants finder website.
- DCJ social media.

10.4 Disclaimer

Every effort has been made to ensure that this publication is free from error and/or omission at the date of publication. The authors, publisher and any person involved in the preparation of this publication take no responsibility for loss occurring to any person acting or refraining from action as a result of information contained herein.

Appendix A: NSW Sexual Violence Recovery & Healing Grants Program Logic (draft)



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