

Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program

Frequently Asked Questions 'FAQ'

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We advise this resource may contain images, or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

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This artwork, titled "Brighter Ways" was created by the talented Kurna and Narungga artist, Charmaine Mumbulla. It reflects the DCJ Transforming Aboriginal Outcomes Division and reminds us that DCJ performs its work on land that always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

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Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Introduction

These FAQ are designed to help organisations and groups that wish to apply for the Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program.

Please read these FAQ in combination with the [Program Guidelines](#) before completing an online application form in SmartyGrants.

FAQ topics and questions

These FAQ are for the Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program and are intended to accompany the [Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program Guidelines](#). Questions and answers below are grouped in topics in the same order as they appear in the Guidelines.

- Overview of the grant
- What grant funds can be used for
- Eligibility and Assessment Criteria
- Completing the application
- Other requirements
- Assessment process
- After applications close

Overview of the Grant

Q: What is the Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program?

A: The Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program's aim is to provide opportunities to Aboriginal entities to deliver one-off and/or time-limited projects and supports to uplift Aboriginal people who have experienced or at risk of experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV).

Q: When can I apply for funding?

Applicants can apply at any time during the open period.

- Applications open 24 March 2025
- Applications close 4:00pm 28 April 2025

Late applications will not be accepted.

Q: When do projects have to be delivered?

The projects must be delivered by 30 June 2026.

Q: What funding can I apply for?

A: There will be three funding categories available to apply for:

- Category 1: grants up to \$10,000
- Category 2: grant amounts \$10,001 - \$75,000
- Category 3: grant amounts \$75,001 - \$150,000.

Q: What are the goals of the projects?

A: Projects are to assist with:

- self-determination by empowering Aboriginal communities to lead and deliver services.
- early intervention of DFSV.
- primary prevention of DFSV.
- healing and recovery for people experiencing violence.
- responding and creating safety for Aboriginal individuals, families, and communities.

Projects will need to contribute to the following outcomes:

- Deliver age-appropriate, culturally safe programs that support recovery and healing from trauma, and address violence-supportive behaviours early.
- Deliver culturally safe responses to people experiencing or at risk of experiencing DFSV.
- Improve responses to family violence and abuse against Aboriginal women and children.
- Deliver culturally safe responses to Aboriginal men and boys who use or at risk of using violence.
- Develop and uplift local, culturally informed practices to inform long-term solutions for safety and violence reduction.
- Enhance the capacity of services to provide trauma-informed, connected, and coordinated responses, supporting long-term recovery, health, and wellbeing.
- Promote safety and wellbeing for Aboriginal individuals, families, and community members.
- Support education and awareness to address and prevent DFSV.
- Implement, research and map activity for primary prevention initiatives and responses for Aboriginal communities.

DCJ recognises that project objectives may intersect across various areas. Applicants are encouraged to clearly articulate how these intersections will be addressed in their application.

Q: Who can apply?

A: To be eligible to apply for the grant program you must be:

- a not-for-profit Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) which includes;
 - Indigenous Corporations (must be registered with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations);
 - the NSW Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC);
 - Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of NSW (AH&MRC);
 - National Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), or
- an Aboriginal specific organisation or sole provider (at least 50% owned and run), or
- Aboriginal business working with Aboriginal communities in NSW, or

- a not-for-profit non-Aboriginal organisation partnering with a lead ACCO or Aboriginal business.

And one of the following organisation types, in a partnership with an Aboriginal organisation (for non-Aboriginal agencies):

- incorporated organisation registered and approved as not-for-profit body by NSW Fair Trading
- not-for profit company limited by guarantee, registered in NSW (must have ACNC registration and/or DGR status)
- religious organisation operating in NSW
- NSW Local Council operating under the Local Government Act 1993
- NSW non-government organisation established under their own Act of Parliament.

Applicants or their partnering organisation must:

- address the NSW National Redress Scheme sanctions.
- not have outstanding acquittals with DCJ.
- be an organisation based in NSW for projects to be carried out in NSW.
- maintain adequate and current insurance cover including, but not limited to; Workers Compensation Insurance, Professional Indemnity Insurance, Personal Accident Insurance.
- have public liability insurance of at least \$10 million per claim or be willing to purchase it. For the purposes of the project, it can be included in the project budget as part of the administration costs.

Q: What is considered an Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation (ACCO)?

A: 'Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations' as defined by clause 44 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap which states that:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community control is an act of self-determination. Under this Agreement, an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Organisation delivers services, including land and resource management that builds the strength and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people and is:

- incorporated under relevant legislation and not-for-profit
- controlled and operated by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people
- connected to the community, or communities, in which they deliver the services
- governed by a majority Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander governing body.

Please see the link for further information on how DCJ defines and works with [Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations](#).

Q: What if I'm a sole trader, am I eligible?

A: Yes. To be an eligible Aboriginal sole trader or business you must have an ABN and the primary business activity relates to delivering services to Aboriginal communities - also noting the project must not be profit making in nature.

Q: What if we are a community/unincorporated group?

A: Unincorporated groups must be Aboriginal community groups led by Aboriginal people.

Not-for-profit unincorporated Aboriginal community groups can only apply for Category 1 funding on their own. If they want to apply for Category 2 or 3 funding, they need to partner with a not-for-profit organisation to receive and manage the funds.

For example, an Aboriginal women's group can apply on their own for Category 1 funding up to \$10,000, but for higher categories, they will need a partner (note mandatory eligibility criteria above).

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

A: Yes, an application must be made by a single Aboriginal led organisation that will accept responsibility for the delivery of the project if the application is successful. Non Aboriginal organisations must also be an eligible organisation as above if part of a joint application.

Q: Can we apply for more than one funding category?

A: Yes. Applicants can apply for more than one category, only if it is for a different project. If you wish to apply for more than one funding category you will need to complete and submit a second application.

What the 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 related to the project. The application must clearly outline your proposed expenditure in the budget.

- Consumables – such as catering, equipment items and materials for activities (excluding alcohol) – for the purposes of the project
- Hiring equipment to be used for the period of the project
- Minor expenses for service delivery such as purchasing phone credit, internet etc.
- Engaging new contractors such as facilitators, trainers and teachers or extending current staff (must be additional hours for specific DFSV support related activities)
- Purchasing minor equipment to support delivery of program activities with equipment up to the **maximum combined value of \$5000**.
- Examples of **Minor Equipment** include, but are not limited to: televisions, video recorders and players, computer monitors, therapy equipment, refrigerators, hand-held electronic devices, electronic games, modular furniture, desks, chairs, conference tables, etc.
- Administering the project, with up to 10% of the requested DCJ funding amount being able to be used for this task or as subcontracting fees where there is a joint contracting arrangement.
- Eligible sole trader/business applicants may include up to 10% of the requested DCJ funding amount to cover remuneration costs.

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:

- Any activity of a commercial nature that is for profit
- Existing debt or budget deficits

- Capital works, including building or renovation work
- Permanent salaries/ ongoing wages (Note: Costs for temporary tutors/instructors for your program or activity can be included)
- Permanent equipment purchases (unless considered Minor Equipment)
- Business as usual costs or general operating expenses
- Purchase of vehicles
- 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
- The same project twice. For example, two different organisations cannot apply for funds for the same program or activity.

Eligibility and assessment criteria

Q: What are the eligibility criteria?

A: Please read the Eligibility Criteria section in the Grant Program Guidelines.

Each applicant, as part of an application response, must confirm that they meet the eligibility criteria. Applicants that do not address the eligibility criteria in full may be excluded from the application process at the department's discretion.

Q: What are the assessment criteria?

A: Eligible projects must meet the following assessment criteria to be considered for funding:

1. **Relevance:** The project aligns with the goals of the grant program and meets the specific DFSV needs of local Aboriginal communities.
2. **Impact:** The project will produce clear, positive results. You need to show proof of past and current success, or the potential to achieve these results.
3. **Implementation:** The applicant has the necessary skills and expertise to complete the project on time and within budget, ensuring good participation and value for money.

Q: Can we apply for funding for an existing project?

Yes, you can apply for a project that has already started, but there are specific conditions to consider.

For example, if you want to extend an existing program into a new location or to target the program to a new client group this is generally allowed. Ensure that your application clearly outlines how the extension or change to the program will build on the existing project and what the anticipated benefits will be.

Existing long-term projects that are already funded may be excluded from new applications. This is to ensure that resources are allocated to new initiatives or significant expansions rather than continuing to fund projects that are already well-supported.

When applying, you might need to identify parts of the project that can get funding. This could be new components, phases, or activities that haven't been funded yet.

Completing the application

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

A: The DCJ Grants team can assist organisations with any questions about the application process. Email the Grant Design and Support 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 check out [Applicant FAQs](#). You can also contact SmartyGrants directly if you are having technical difficulties with the application form or your SmartyGrants account/password, email service@smartygrants.com.au.

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: I don't have reliable access to the internet, how can I apply online?

A: Applications can be completed at any time before the closing date **4:00pm 26th April 2025**. Applications can be completed across multiple sessions; please ensure you save as you go. You can access the application form and system using any computer that has an internet connection.

In case of any difficulty with the internet connection or SmartyGrants, please contact service@smartygrants.com.au, and staff will be happy to assist you with the technical requirements.

Q: Can I download a copy of 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 answer the Assessment Criteria questions via audio recording?

A: Yes. You can choose to respond to questions about your project by uploading a short audio recording of yourself or other members of your organisation reading the questions and answers aloud.

You can upload a single file or a separate file for each question.

You will still need to complete mandatory questions about your eligibility and organisation in the application form.

Q: Do I need professional equipment to record my answers?

A: Audio responses can be recorded on a mobile phone or portable audio recording device. Professional editing or production is NOT required or expected.

DCJ staff are available to support you with recording and preparing a file for upload if required. Please contact GrantDesignandSupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au for assistance.

Q: Can someone else submit the application on the behalf of the applicant organisation?

A: No. The applicant organisation must submit their own application in Smarty Grants. Any application submitted by a third party, or any consultant will be deemed as ineligible.

Q: How do I record my answers on audio?

A: When planning to record your audio responses think about:

- location and background noise.
- equipment – mobile phone or portable audio recording device
- style – are you answering the questions or is someone interviewing you?
- the quality – is it clear and easy to hear?
- practicing getting more comfortable and become more natural when speaking on the microphone
- listening to the recording and make notes on where you can improve or make more appropriate responses
- make sure you answer all the questions.

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

A: While letters of support or references are appreciated, they are not required. Please ensure that you complete the application form and submit any requested documents through SmartyGrants, as these will be the only materials considered in the evaluation process.

Q: Can we submit more than one application?

A: Yes, for different funding Categories, and it must be for a different project.

Q. Should we include GST in our application?

A: No. 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 or Adobe Acrobat Sign 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 or Adobe Acrobat Sign, 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: Is it too late to apply?

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

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 NSW [National Redress Scheme Sanctions Policy](#).

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.

Assessment process

Q: What is the assessment process?

A: The assessment process for a one stage application:

1. DCJ eligibility team conducts a review to ensure eligibility the eligibility criteria listed above and general compliance with guidelines
2. DCJ assessment team will assess each eligible application against the assessment criteria listed above and make recommendations for the final decision maker.

After applications close

Q: What happens when you receive my application?

A: Applicants will be formally notified by May 2025 if their application 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 by May 2025. 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 by May 2025 and shortly after a Grants Funding Agreement will be sent via DocuSign or Adobe Acrobat Sign 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 or Adobe Acrobat Sign, 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: Successful applicants will need to submit quarterly reports, mid-term and final reports or others as applicable.

Q: What are the acquittals requirements?

A: Successful applicants will be required to submit a simple financial acquittal by 31 July 2026. 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.



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