

Questions and Answers

Sector Readiness Fund – Fund Administrator Grant

Application Process

1. What is the closing time and date for applications?

The Application Form/s must be submitted by 2.00pm AEST on 12 June 2018. It is recommended that you submit your application/s well before the closing time and date.

2. If I am not able to submit my application by the due time and date, can I be granted an extension?

No, extensions will not be given.

If an application is late or the Community Grants Hub is requested to approve a lodgement after the closing date the [late application policy](#) available on the Community Grants Hub website will apply.

3. When will I know the outcome of my application?

You will be notified of the outcome of your application at the end of the selection process. For probity reasons, to treat all applicants fairly and equally, it is not possible to give you information about the status of individual applications during the assessment process.

4. How can I submit the Application Form?

The form is an online Application Form that you must submit electronically. The Community Grants Hub will not provide application forms or accept application forms for this Grant Opportunity by fax, email or through Australia Post unless otherwise stated in the Grant Opportunity Documents

Grant Opportunity

5. What is the purpose of this Grant Opportunity?

This Grant Opportunity is for the selection of a fund administrator for the Sector Readiness Fund (the Fund) with expertise in the Australian social impact investing market. The successful fund administrator will be responsible for delivering the Fund and independently implementing their own selection processes to distribute grants from the Fund. This role will involve administering small grants for capability building activities to be undertaken by relevant external specialist advisors with the capacity to provide these services.

6. How much funding is available for this Program?

The Australian Government has announced a total of up to \$7 million for the fund administrator to distribute as grants through the Fund.

An additional amount of up to \$480,000 is allocated for the fund administrator to pay for the overhead costs of managing the Fund and the related selection process.

7. Is the funding on-going?

The funding will be available upon execution of the Grant Agreement until 30 June 2021.

8. Does our attached selection process have to fit into the word count of Criterion 3?

No. Criterion 3 only requires you to demonstrate how your organisation will assess grant applications for the fund, with regard to your selection process. Your selection process is a separate required attachment to your application. It does not have a specific word count, so long as the document is no bigger than 2mb.

Operation of the Fund

9. How many grants can be made from the Fund?

There is no set number of grants to be distributed from the Fund. However, it is expected that between 50 to 100 grants will be issued, depending on the number of applicants to the Fund and their capability building needs. The quantum of each grant distributed from the Fund is at the discretion of the fund administrator with regard to the activity being funded.

10. Are there restrictions on activities that can be supported by the Fund?

Yes. The Government has provided a list of outcome areas and activities that are supported by the Fund at Appendix A of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. In addition, organisations supported by the Fund must: deliver one or more clear and measurable social outcomes; use the grant funds to pay for capability building support that assists grant recipients to bring an investable product to market; have well-developed projects that are highly likely to come to the social impact investing market; be based in Australia and deliver the supported program solely in Australia; and have a core commitment to solve social problems.

11. What types of organisations are eligible to receive grants from the Fund?

Any organisation that meets the eligibility criteria set by the Government (listed in Question 10) and any additional criteria that the fund administrator's organisation may deem necessary. The fund administrator must not determine eligibility based on entity type, such as Deductible Gift Recipient status.

12. What are examples of capability building activities that can be supported by the Fund?

Capability building activities supported by the Fund may include, but are not limited to:

- Business planning
- Financial modelling
- Financial structuring
- Capital raising and advisory services
- Contract negotiation support
- Legal support
- Other specialist advice including support with outcome measurement and evaluation, development of governance structures.

Specific capability building activities supported by the Fund will be at the discretion of the fund administrator

13. Can I apply to administer the Fund for a reduced sub-set of the activity list at Appendix A of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines?

No. The fund administrator is expected to administer the Fund to **any** eligible organisation that fits within the broad outcome areas defined at Appendix A of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

14. Can I apply to administer the Fund in a single state or territory in Australia?

No. The fund administrator must administer the fund nationally and distribute the Fund impartially, without preference to one or more jurisdictions.

15. Can the successful fund administrator provide capability building services to grant recipients of the Fund?

No. The organisation selected as the successful fund administrator cannot provide capability building services paid for by grant recipients of the Fund. These services must be provided by specialist advisors external to the fund administrator's organisation.

16. Why can't the successful fund administrator provide capability building services to grant recipients of the Fund?

Allowing the fund administrator to deliver capability building services directly to grant recipients may result in conflicts of interest.

17. How is the successful fund administrator expected to implement a selection process for applicants to the Fund?

The fund administrator is expected to implement their own independent and rigorous process to select applicants to the Fund. As part of the selection criteria for this Grant Opportunity, applicants must provide their proposed selection process for assessment. Applicants will have a certain amount of discretion in how the Fund can be administered.

18. Can organisations with experience delivering a capability building grant in another sector apply?

As an open and competitive grant round, all organisations are welcome to apply to this Grant Opportunity. However, as part of the selection process applicants must demonstrate expert knowledge of and experience in the social impact investing market in Australia and show their connection with other stakeholders in the Australian social impact investing sector.

Evaluation

19. Who is responsible for evaluating the Fund?

The fund administrator will have some responsibility for collecting data to support evaluation of the Fund and for performance managing grant recipients. The department will contract an external evaluator to evaluate how effective the Fund is at achieving its defined outcomes. The roles and responsibilities of both parties will be discussed further during grant agreement negotiations.

20. Where should I go for further information?

If you have any further questions during the application period, please contact the Community Grants Hub on 1800 020 283 or email to support@communitygrants.gov.au. The Community Grants Hub will respond to emailed questions within five working days.

Answers to questions may be posted on GrantConnect and the Community Grants Hub websites.

The question period will close on 5 June 2018. Following this time, only questions relating to using and/or submitting the application form will be answered.

Question and answer added 10 May 2018

21. What is required in the first attachment, 'identifying organisations and ensuring project delivery within defined outcome areas'?

This is where you must provide your proposed process for selecting grant applicants for grants from the Fund. This must include:

- details of how you will identify organisations who are towards the end of the investment pipeline but still require capability building support to bring their idea to market
- details of how you will ensure funded organisations deliver projects focused only within the defined outcome areas at Appendix A.

There is no word or page limit on this document but it must be under 2mb.

Questions and answers added 22 May 2018

22. Does DSS have a preferred grants platform for the Fund Administrator to use (e.g. SmartyGrants)? Will the Fund Administrator be provided with a license to use this?

No, this is at the discretion of the Fund Administrator. As per Criterion 3, applicants should demonstrate how their organisation would assess grant applications for the Fund in regard to the principles of the Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs), with reference to the Activity, Appendix A and your proposed selection process.

23. Will the Fund Administrator be responsible for contracting of and providing contract management services to grant recipients?

The Fund Administrator is required to enter into and manage contracts with grant recipients to ensure organisations meet Commonwealth requirements outlined in Section 4.1.2 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

24. Can you confirm if the Fund Administrator will be responsible for distribution of grants?

Yes, the Fund Administrator will be responsible for the distribution of grants.

25. Will any grant funding, disbursed by the Fund Administrator be pre-financed by DSS? If so what modality will be used for pre-financing e.g. imprest account?

As per section 4.2.2 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, funding provided to the Fund Administrator is to be granted to organisations for capability building services. This funding will be paid at relevant milestones as negotiated and outlined in the grant agreement with the Fund Administrator.

26. How many rounds of funding will there be?

The number of funding rounds is at the discretion of the Fund Administrator.

27. What forms of Due Diligence is the Fund Administrator expected to undertake on prospective grant recipients (in addition to confirming they meet the basic criteria set out in the existing guidelines)?

The Fund Administrator is expected to undertake due diligence with regard to the principles of the Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs), with reference to the Activity and Appendix A to the grant opportunity guidelines.

28. What involvement does DSS wish to have in the assessment and decision making process? Will the Fund Administrator be expected to shortlist recipient candidates?

The assessment and decision making process is at the discretion of the Fund Administrator.

29. Does DSS judge these grants to be high risk?

DSS has assessed the risks of the activity and has appropriate mitigations in place.

The Fund Administrator will also be required as part of the selection process to undertake sufficient due diligence to ensure compliance of the grant recipients.

30. What proportion of Fund Administrator funds are expected to be expended on M&E? What are DSS expectations in terms of formal reporting on inputs and outcomes?

Reporting requirements will be outlined within the grant agreement with the Fund Administrator.

In regards to evaluation, DSS will engage an independent evaluator separately to the Fund Administrator to assess the overall performance of the Readiness Fund.

31. Will agencies involved in identifying priority outcome areas have an ongoing role and if so, will the Fund Administrator be responsible for engagement with agencies other than DSS or will this be coordinated through the Community Grants Hub?

DSS will manage necessary engagement with government stakeholders. This will not be the Fund Administrator's responsibility.