



Disability Representative Organisations (DRO)

Feedback for applicants

The Department of Social Services (the department) has provided the following general feedback for applicants of the Disability Representative Organisations (DRO) grant opportunity.

Assessment of applications was in accordance with the procedure detailed in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines (guidelines) and outlined in the selection process below.

Overview

The application submission period opened on 3 October 2023 and closed on 27 November 2023.

The DRO program provides the opportunity for people with disability, and their representative organisations, to have their views communicated to the Australian Government. Organisations funded under the DRO grant opportunity will participate in a range of engagement activities with the Australian Government, to ensure disability issues and a diversity of voices are represented in decision-making, legislation, policy development and implementation of programs and policies that may affect people with disability.

Selection Process

The Community Grants Hub (the Hub) undertook the initial screening for organisation eligibility and compliance against the requirements outlined in the guidelines. This information was provided to the department's grant opportunity delegate for final decisions on whether an application met the eligibility and compliance criteria.

The Hub undertook the preliminary assessment on all applications through a targeted competitive grant process. Applications which had undergone preliminary assessment were provided to the department's selection advisory panel (panel) for deliberation.

The panel established by the department, comprised of subject matter experts who assessed applications and provided advice to inform the funding recommendations to the financial delegate.

When assessing and deliberating on applications the panel took into consideration a number of factors including the inclusion and exclusion of late applications, the volume of applications received, meeting the identified requirements outlined in the guidelines and the available funding envelope.

The panel's consideration of assessed applications was, based on:

- suitability against the compliance criteria in the guidelines
- suitability against the eligibility criteria in the guidelines
- how well the responses met the assessment criterion
- how well the application compared against other applications
- alignment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)
- whether the application demonstrated value with relevant money

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- identified risks and the proposed mitigation strategies for the department and the Commonwealth
 - how the application contributed to representing the diversity of people with disability.

The panel also noted:

- The applicants selected for funding were not necessarily allocated the funding amount they applied for
- Some applications appropriately addressed the assessment criterion but were not successful based on how they compared to other applications.

Selection Results

There was a strong interest in the grant opportunity and applications were of a high standard. The preferred applicants demonstrated their ability to meet the grant requirements outlined in the guidelines based on the strength of their responses to the assessment criterion.

The Hub notified applicants of the outcome in writing, where their applications did not meet the requirements outlined in the guidelines.

This feedback is provided to assist grant applicants to understand what comprised a strong application and the content of quality responses to the assessment criterion.

Criterion 1: Cohort

When addressing this criterion strong applicants described:

- the cohort their organisation(s) would represent
- why it was important this cohort was represented
- their organisation's sector expertise and authority to effectively represent the cohort, including the diversity of experience within the cohort
- the members of their organisation(s).

Strong applications:

- clearly identified the target cohort/s they would represent, the importance of their target cohort/s being represented, and used credible evidence to support their claims
- provided a range of evidence to support the applicant's expertise and authority to effectively represent the cohort including detailing the applicant's level of experience, current and previous relationships with the target cohort/s, and other relevant expertise
- provided a detailed description of the applicant's members, governance structures, and suitability of key personnel.

Criterion 2: Engagement

When addressing this criterion strong applicants described:

- how they would engage in active, regular, accessible consultation and engagement with their cohort to ensure their views would be represented
- how they would ensure representation and active engagement with people in all states and territories, including harder-to-reach groups.

Strong applications:

- detailed the engagement strategies the applicant would use to consult with their target cohort/s
- detailed how they would ensure representation for people with disabilities across all states and territories would be achieved including harder-to-reach groups
- detailed how they would ensure engagement with people with disabilities across all states and territories would be achieved including harder-to-reach groups.

Criterion 3: Capability

When addressing this criterion strong applicants described:

- the skills, expertise and lived experience their organisation(s) had and the governance systems in place to support representation and engagement with the cohort
- how their organisation(s) would build internal capability and systems/processes which supported long-term sustainability of their organisation.

Strong applications:

- provided a range of evidence to support the applicant's skills, expertise and lived experience, outlining their governance structures, including the number of staff with a disability
- provided a detailed description of the strategies they would use to build internal capability including training programs for staff, and how they would use/improve internal systems/processes to support their organisation's long-term sustainability.

Criterion 4: Collaboration

When addressing this criterion strong applicants described:

- how they would work collaboratively with key stakeholders to advocate for the rights of people with disability, including other organisations funded through the DRO program and the Australian Government
- where other organisations were funded to represent the same cohort, how they would collaborate and/or partner to collectively address social barriers for the benefit of all people in the cohort.

Strong applications:

- provided a detailed description of their key stakeholders, including how they would be involved in advocating for the rights of people with disability.
- described their proposed strategies to collaborate with other organisations funded to represent the same cohort, including how they would approach and engage the other organisations in the DRO program.

Individual feedback

Individual feedback will not be provided for this grant opportunity.
