Information, Linkages and Capacity Building - Individual Capacity Building Grant Opportunity 2024–25

Feedback for applicants

The Department of Social Services (the department) has provided the following general feedback for applicants of the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) - Individual Capacity Building 2024–25 (ICB) 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 7 September 2023 and closed on 30 November 2023. The grant opportunity received 582 applications.

The ILC program is a Commonwealth grants program which supports all people with disability, regardless of whether they are eligible for a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) individually funded package.

The goal of the ILC program is to increase social and community participation for all people with disability by:

- building the capacity of people with disability to participate in their community and
- creating opportunities for people with disability to participate by creating more inclusive services and communities.

The objectives of this grant opportunity are:

- people with disability, their families, and carers, have the skills, knowledge and confidence to access and navigate disability, health, and other community services and activities
- people with disability, their families, and carers, are aware of their rights and have the skills, knowledge, and confidence to exercise those rights and
- the innovation of new disability care and inclusion ideas and practices that may offer a model to better supporting the objectives above.

The intended outcomes of the grant opportunity are people with disability will have increased skills and knowledge:

- about disability rights and self-advocacy
- to socially connect and develop meaningful relationships
- to navigate and connect with services and supports they need
- to enable greater independence and
- to make their own decisions, participate, lead, and contribute in the community.

Funding of up to $90 million (GST exclusive) over 3 years was available.

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 received through an Open Competitive grant process. Applications which had undergone preliminary assessment were provided to the department's selection advisory panel (the panel) for deliberation.

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

The panel was supported by an Expert Advisory Group (EAG) comprising of representatives from the states and territories who offered advice relevant to their jurisdiction, and the Department of Health and Aged Care who provided specialised advice in relation to psychosocial disability.

When assessing and deliberating on applications the panel took into consideration several factors including the inclusion or 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:

- Compliance with the guidelines, including the requirement to address the outcomes and objectives of the grant opportunity

- Suitability against the eligibility (including additional eligibility) criteria in the guidelines

- Whether the proposed activities targeted a priority cohort and/or people with an intellectual disability, psychosocial disability, or autism

- How well the application responses met the assessment criterion

- The extent to which applications compared against other applications

- Whether the application provided value with relevant money.

General Comments from the Panel

The panel favoured those applications that:

- Aligned with the Social Model of Disability

- Clearly identified how they would meet the outcomes and objectives of the grant opportunity as outlined in the guidelines

- Clearly identified how many and how people with a disability, their families, and carers, would benefit from the activities

- Clearly articulated how people with disability would be involved in co-design and delivery of the activities

- Clearly articulated how they would support nominated priority cohorts, including through engagement and co-design

- Clearly demonstrated the ability to provide face-to-face services and a presence in their nominated jurisdictions, including rural and remote locations

Were supported by the relevant EAG representatives Applications were required to align with the outcomes and objectives outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

Applications which demonstrated how the activities would result in increased individual capacity building were highly regarded.

Applications which identified how many people with disabilities would benefit from and be involved in the co-design and implementation of the activities were also highly regarded. These applications placed an emphasis on the lived experience of people involved with the activities.

As stated in the guidelines, applicants were required to be either:

- a Disabled Peoples' Organisation

- a Priority Cohort Led Organisation

- a Family Organisation

- an organisation with a physical address in an MMM 2-7 area or

- an organisation in a consortium with one of the above.

The EAG noted applications who allocated appropriate funding and were able to outline on-the-ground contacts in the proposed delivery jurisdictions were highly regarded – the EAG further noted that IT based applications presumed a level of IT competency and access that might not be present in the community.

Applications which demonstrated the ability to provide face-to-face services and a presence in, or connection to, nominated jurisdictions, including rural and remote locations, were also highly regarded.

The panel notes:

- The EAG highlighted that not all projects listed as having a 'National' reach had the capacity to deliver nationally.

- Applications with a focus that fell outside the outcomes and objectives, or the eligible activities and budget items of the grant opportunity, were not eligible for funding.

- Applications identified as substantially duplicating resources or activities that currently exist, or that are the responsibility of other programs or entities, were not eligible for funding.

- Applications proposing development of new Information Technology tools, such as Apps, without identifying strategies for long term sustainability, were not viewed favourably.

- Applications that did not articulate appropriate culturally competent engagement strategies and supports, were not viewed favourably.

Selection Results

There was a strong interest in the grant opportunity. 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 criteria.

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

Describe the proposed activity/ies to be delivered over the life of the grant and explain why these are needed.

When addressing the criterion, a strong application:

- outlined the problem/need being addressed as part of the grant opportunity
- explained which activities would be undertaken to address the problem/need
- detailed why the activity/project was needed by their target group and included supporting evidence where possible
- explained how the proposal addressed the grant opportunity objectives outlined in section 2.1 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines
- identified where the activities are located, why they are needed in that location and how they would be delivered in each location (that is, in person/other).

Applicants were also asked to have:

- listed milestones (including the independent evaluation) and timeframes of the project
- explained how the milestones would be achieved, including what 'success' would look like and how they would test it
- outlined the risks associated with implementing their project, including any mitigation and management strategies in place.

Strong applications:

- Clearly described the problem and/or need, identified target cohort/s, and linked these to the aim of the grant opportunity. To support their claim, applicants provided supporting evidence of the problem and/or need their application was aiming to address
- Provided a detailed description of each activity they were proposing to deliver including how the activity would be delivered and clearly linked the activity to the problem and/or need the applicant was addressing
- Provided a detailed description of why the activity would address the needs of their target cohort/s
- Provided a combination of supporting evidence including anecdotal, feedback from consultations and research, specifically for their target cohort/s
- Clearly linked the intended outcomes of their proposed activity to the grant objectives
- Provided a range of evidence to support why the target cohort/s, in each selected geographical area needed this activity, including, for example, relevant socio-demographic statistics. The service delivery model was clearly described and clarified, for example, if the project was online, in person, or a combination of both.
- In addition, applicants:
  - Provided a detailed description of milestones and timeframes for the project
  - Explained how the milestones would be achieved, including what 'success' would look like and how it would be tested, including the methodologies which would be used
  - Outlined the risks associated with implementing the project, including any mitigation and management strategies in place.

Criterion 2

Provide details of how people with disability will be involved in planning and implementing the grant activity/ies, the expected outcomes and the project's potential for sustainability.

When addressing the criterion, a strong application:

- demonstrated the involvement people with disability would have in the project

- explained the expected outcomes and how they would measure the outcomes achieved

- detailed how their activity/ies could be scaled up and/or how the activities would be sustainable beyond the grant period.

Strong applications:

- Provided details about the levels of involvement people with disability would have throughout the project, specific roles, the organisation's experience in co-design with the target cohort/s, were culturally appropriate and identified the expected benefits for individuals and community

- Detailed specific measures for each of the expected outcomes, including a description of qualitative and quantitative methods

- Detailed how outcomes would be recorded and inform future recommendations

- Identified potential and existing support systems to enhance the longevity of the project, the dissemination and/or access to developed resources, and connected this to their overall vision/aims for the project and the broader community.

Criterion 3

Demonstrate your organisation's capability and capacity to successfully deliver the grant activity/ies.

When addressing the criterion, a strong application:

- demonstrated the organisation's experience and capacity including experience in delivering similar projects

- described the organisation's existing partnerships with key stakeholders and explained their role in the project

- provided details of the key stakeholders and/or partnerships required to successfully implement the activity/ies.

Strong applications:

- Detailed the organisation's structure, governance, and the suitability of key personnel in relation to the project

- Demonstrated the organisation's level of experience in managing projects, current and previous relationships with the target cohort/s and other relevant expertise

- Provided detailed information on partnerships and how they would leverage these relationships to contribute to the project and to the organisation

- Distinguished between existing and future relationships, provided detail on how these relationships would be developed and why they are needed to successfully implement the activity.

Individual feedback

Individual feedback will not be provided for this grant opportunity**.**