



Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Inclusion Round

Feedback for applicants

The Department of Social Services (the department) has provided the following general feedback for applicants of the Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Inclusion Round (the Inclusion Round) grant opportunity.

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

Overview

The application submission period opened on 21 September 2023 and closed on 14 November 2023. The grant opportunity received 185 applications.

Safe Places is a capital works program funding the building, renovation, or purchase of new or expanded emergency accommodation for women and children experiencing family and domestic violence (FDV).

As part of the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032* (the National Plan), the Government committed \$100 million over 5 years (2022–23 to 2026–27) to the Safe Places Inclusion Round.

The intended outcomes of the Inclusion Round are:

- Women and children experiencing FDV are housed in safe places created by additional emergency accommodation.
- First Nations women and children, women, and children from culturally and linguistically (CALD) backgrounds, and women and children with disability can access emergency accommodation with appropriate supports to meet their needs.

Selection Process

The Community Grants Hub undertook the initial screening for organisation eligibility and compliance against the requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity 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 department assessed and considered compliant applications through an open competitive grant process. The selection advisory panel (panel) established by the department, comprised of subject matter experts who reviewed applications and provided advice to inform the funding recommendations to the Financial Delegate.

When reviewing applications, the panel took into consideration several factors including, meeting the identified requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines and the available funding envelope.

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

- compliance with the Grant Opportunity Guidelines
 - suitability against the eligibility criteria in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines
 - how well the applications responses met the assessment criterion
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- the extent to which applications compared against other applications, including the geographic spread of projects
 - whether applications provided value with relevant money
 - identified risks and the proposed mitigation strategies for the department and the Commonwealth.

Selection Results

There was a strong interest in the grant opportunity and applications were of a high standard. Preferred applicants demonstrated their ability to meet the grant requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines based on the strength of their responses to the assessment criterion and submission of capital works proposals that met all minimum requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

The Community Grants Hub notified applicants of the outcome in writing, where their applications did not meet the requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity 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

Explain how your project meets demand for emergency accommodation and provides access to services.

Preferred responses:

- Outlined the location of the accommodation and the group(s) of women and children the project aimed to support.
- Demonstrated the unmet demand for emergency accommodation in the proposed location.
- Explained why the location of the accommodation was appropriate for the needs of First Nations women and children, women, and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and/or women and children with disability, including access to general services, amenities and public transport.

Strong applications:

- Gave specific details about the chosen location for the project, including where possible addresses or a list of potential sites, and explained why they in particular chose to support their target cohort.
- Provided a variety of evidence sources to support unmet demand, including data from AIHW, the ABS, court and police statistics, academic research, and/or first-hand accounts from frontline workers in the area.
- Demonstrated a nuanced understanding of the target groups' needs, with specific reference to the priority cohorts, and linked these needs with specific project design choices throughout their application.
- Explained how the location and nearby services/amenities support these needs, specifically the needs of priority cohort women and children, and provided insight into how the applicant would be able to connect clients with those services.



Criterion 2

Explain how your project provides the priority group(s) with dignity, security, safety and privacy.

Preferred responses:

- Explained how the design of the accommodation meets the needs of First Nations women and children, women, and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and/or women and children with disability, and meets the requirements of the Inclusion Round.
- Explained how the project incorporates specialist support services that meet the needs of First Nations women and children, women, and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and/or women and children with disability.
- Outlined how the design of accommodation and types of specialist services was determined, including consultation with local community and women and children the project aims to support.
- Demonstrated specialist support services are client-centred, trauma-informed, accessible, and culturally appropriate.
- Provided evidence of the organisation's existing links with relevant services and stakeholders in the community.
- Provided evidence of an intake and assessment procedure and a safety plan appropriate for the women and children who will use the accommodation.

Strong applications:

- Provided concept drawings (or similar) showing the design of the accommodation is appropriate for client needs, as described in the applicant's response to the criterion.
- Linked assessment of client needs to specific decisions made in designing the accommodation and support services, including clear evidence of how the accommodation and support services protect the dignity, security, safety, and privacy of all clients and particularly priority group clients.
- Listed all the specialist support services available to clients, and explained how the applicant would support clients in accessing them (for example, in-house delivery, referrals to other services, on-call specialists, and so on), including letters of support from external services where possible.
- Described thorough and genuine engagement with the groups the project is designed to support, through consultation with community organisations, advocacy groups, experts, and women and children with lived experience, ideally from the priority cohorts.
- Gave evidence the specialist support services are trauma-informed and particularly appropriate for women and children the project aims to support, though supporting evidence such as letters of support, accreditation certificates, key policies, intake/assessment forms, safety plans.
- Included a detailed list of relevant services and stakeholders with which it has a relationship, that identifies the service by name rather than in a generic category and describes the nature of the relationship (for example, formal partnership, two-way referrals, information only), with supporting evidence (for example, letters of support) where possible.

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- Provided clear intake and assessment procedures, including attached evidence those procedures are accessible, trauma-informed, and culturally appropriate for the client group, as well as a safety plan that is suitable for the priority cohorts' needs.

Criterion 3

Explain how the cost and design of your project represents value for money.

In addition to completing and attaching the provided Capital Works Project Plan and Budget template, a preferred response:

- Explained why the cost of the project offered value for money based on the location, design (including compliance with the Livable Housing Design Guidelines as specified in section 2.2 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines), type of capital works required and building standards.
- Outlined how the cost of the project accounted for contingency funding and unexpected expenses, including capital works costs that might increase in the future.
- Demonstrated available land, property and construction as it related to their project.
- Outlined any other sources of funding or in-kind contributions that would contribute to the project and provide funding amounts and evidence where possible.

Strong applications:

- Discussed factors impacting the cost of the project, including location, type of capital works, availability of construction materials and workers and made a convincing case the project is of high value considering its cost.
- Justified the inclusion of design elements that added to the cost of the project (for example, additional design features, flexible configurations, higher LHA standards than Silver) by explaining how these elements provide added value to clients, particularly clients in the priority groups.
- Explained the logic behind the allowance made for contingency funding and gave evidence or information to suggest the contingency allowance and overall cost of the project is well-informed and has been verified by a third party (for example, quantity surveyor, building contractor quote, capital works consultant).
- Discussed potential risks beyond the standard list given in the Project Plan and provided well-reasoned and realistic risk mitigation strategies.
- Provided an in-depth description, and evidence where possible, of the land (or property) available for this project, or of what the applicant has done so far to identify and secure land or property (for example, a title deed, property option agreement, letter confirming negotiations, description of property market research).
- Discussed in detail the construction plans for this project, including the status of project design, engagement with contractors, and project management plans, including supporting evidence (for example, concept drawings, builder quotes, communication with contractors).
- Provided evidence of other sources of funding or in-kind contributions, including the name of the source and specific funding amount, with evidence indicating the certainty of these contributions such as bank statements, annual reports, letters of support.



Criterion 4

Demonstrate you have the expertise and resources to deliver the project and support clients.

Preferred responses:

- Demonstrated the organisation, or a partner organisation, has experience delivering similar projects and managing relationships with builders to ensure capital works projects are completed to appropriate standards on time and within budget.
- Outlined policies for managing tenancy and referrals, including how long clients can stay in the accommodation, under what circumstances potential clients would be turned away, and how women and children would be referred to other emergency accommodation and services if necessary.
- Provided evidence the organisation can fund ongoing specialist services for women and children using the accommodation and ongoing maintenance of the accommodation over the 15-year Designated Use Period.

Strong applications:

- Provided convincing, relevant examples of previous projects undertaken similar in size and scope to the current proposal, with specific reference to delivering those projects to an appropriate standard on time and within budget, supported by evidence where possible (for example, letters of support, reports on previous projects).
- Explained the applicant or its partner organisation's experience in managing relationships with builders and other contractors, and outlined the roles and qualifications of key staff and external contractors who will be working on the project.
- Gave detailed descriptions of the applicant's tenancy management policies and referral practices, with supporting evidence including copies of these policies and related documents.
- Specified how long clients can stay in the accommodation (if longer than 12 months, with an explanation of why this is appropriate and needed for the client group) and what referral pathways are in place.
- Clearly explained the circumstances under which a client might be turned away and described appropriate referral pathways to other suitable emergency management services (with evidence such as letters of support from other services where possible).
- Provided evidence to support claims about capacity to deliver ongoing specialist services and maintenance funding (for example, letters of support, letters confirming grant funding, audited financial statements, annual reports).
- Gave clear and realistic explanations of how the applicant plans to secure operational funding in the future and how revenue streams are generated through streams other than government funding, including partnerships, fundraising activities, client rent, where applicable.

Individual feedback

Individual feedback will be provided for this grant opportunity. To request individual feedback please follow the instructions as set out in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines section 9.1.