



Community-led Men's Wellness Centres for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Feedback for applicants

The Department of Social Services (the department) has provided the following general feedback for applicants of the Community-led Men's Wellness Centres for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples 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 18 December 2023 and closed on 16 February 2024.

The Community-led Men's Wellness Centres for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples program (the program) is funding organisations to establish or expand men's wellness and healing activities. This was one of the immediate priority grant opportunities identified in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2023-2025 which was developed in partnership between Commonwealth and state and territory governments and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council. The program aims to prevent violence against women and children by facilitating improved understanding of healthy relationships and increasing the presence of positive role models.

The program aims to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by helping Indigenous-led providers design tailored activities to better meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men with multiple and complex needs. Activities may include prosocial early support, cultural healing and education on respectful relationships, healthy parenting, mentoring, living skills and alcohol and other drugs, and understanding diverse experiences of abuse such as technology facilitated abuse and coercive control.

In line with the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2023–2025*, the program is designed to centre Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural knowledge, frameworks, and responses in the way that services are designed and delivered, to align with the unique histories and needs of each community needs.

Selection Process

The Community Grants Hub (the 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 Hub undertook the preliminary assessment on all applications through a Restricted 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.

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When assessing and deliberating on applications the panel took into consideration a number of factors incorporating the inclusion or exclusion of late applications, the volume of applications received, 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:

- alignment with the grant opportunity objectives
- compliance with the Grant Opportunity Guidelines
- suitability against the eligibility criteria in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines
- how well the application's responses met the assessment criterion
- the extent applications compared against other applications
- whether it provided value with relevant money
- identified risks and the proposed mitigation strategies

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 Grant Opportunity 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 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

Why do you think this program is a good fit for your community?

Tell us about some of the challenges in your community impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and the need for change.

Strong applications:

- described the primary areas where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members were looking to lead and drive solutions, centred in local culture and knowledge.
 - provided examples of how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members would come together to develop community-led services and/or programs to support men and prevent violence against women and children by challenging gender stereotypes and promoting healthy relationships.
 - described how their project would engage with the community and aligned the model with local priorities.
 - described the intended impact, scale and proposed geographical locations for the project and how the project would be best suited for the proposed geographical location.
 - provided clear evidence, evaluation, and data related to the need in the proposed geographical locations.
 - provided detail about how the project would interact with the community, and what this would achieve.
 - provided detailed actions specifically linked to increasing access to men's wellness activities that aim to prevent violence against women and children.
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Criterion 2

What will you do with the funding if successful?

Describe your proposed service, program, or campaign and how it will support establishing Men's Wellness Centres for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in your area.

Strong applications:

- described the specific actions they would pursue to support the establishment of Men's Wellness Centres for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- described how the project would deliver on the objectives and outcomes of this grant round and contribute to Target 13 (by 2031, reduce the rate of all forms of family violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children by at least 50%, as progress towards zero) in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.
- provided examples of how community members came together to gather information and build support for community-led changes in attitude and societal norms through positive role models.
- described how their project, plan or strategy would continue to be First Nations-led and centred around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing.
- described their plan to collaborate with relevant services, stakeholders, or organisations to achieve their projects aims. Including, who and why and information about the way any partnerships would work, for example Memoranda of Understanding or Service Agreements.
- project activities were directly related to the outcomes and objectives of the grant round.
- detailed the expected impact for the community.
- provided clear reference to the use of positive role models within the community.
- where applicable, described the nature of any partnerships or relationships with relevant services, stakeholders, or organisations to be used to achieve the project aims. Formal partnerships were outlined with reference to Service agreements and Memorandums of understanding.

Criterion 3

How will you do it?

Describe how your organisation will deliver the project.

Strong applications:

- provided a description of the proposed project and activities and how it would address the objectives and outcomes of the grant activities, including how the initiative would be designed, implemented, and evaluated. (What data they would use, and what success would look like in their local context).
- included information about who would run the day-to-day operation of the project (for example, staff, budgets) and how major decisions would be made (for example, decision-making structure) over time.
- described how their organisation would create and support culturally responsive and safe environments and processes for staff and community members who support the project.
- identified if their organisation would be seeking additional financial, in-kind or logistical support from other organisations to maximise impact or strengthen the financial sustainability of the project over the long term (for example, non-government-organisations, philanthropic funders, service providers, local/state/territory governments).

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- detailed the planned actions with specific reference to design and implementation phases as well as how the project would be evaluated.
- provided detailed explanation of how the project would address the objectives and outcomes of the grant.
- provided detailed explanations of the project governance structure and outlined responsibilities and roles of staff working on the project.
- provided clear strategies as to how both staff and community members who participate in the project would be ensured a culturally responsive and safe environment.
- provided details of the additional support their organisation would need to achieve success with their project, including who would be providing the additional support and what impact it would have on the project.

Individual feedback

Individual feedback will also be available upon request, with guidance provided by the department on how unsuccessful applicants can improve their proposal for future opportunities. Applicants seeking individual feedback should submit requests to DedicatedActionPlan@dss.gov.au.

Applicants may request written feedback or verbal feedback.

Written feedback will be provided within 14 days of receipt of the request. Verbal feedback will be provided as soon as practicable for both parties.