

Aboriginal Communities Disaster Preparedness Grant Program – Frequently Asked Questions ‘FAQs’

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December 2024



Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Communities and Justice acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live. We celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contributed to the development of this.

We advise this resource may contain images, or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

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Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) Grant Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Template

Introduction

The Grant Program FAQ lists the most commonly asked questions and responses regarding the grant program and are developed to assist potential applicants.

This FAQ template has been developed to assist DCJ officers when preparing FAQ for new grants programs. It includes sample questions and responses grouped by topics and any of the content in the template may be modified, added to, or deleted, as required by each grant program.

DCJ officers completing this template are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the information provided, and it is recommended that the content is sourced from appropriately endorsed documents, including, but not limited to the grant program specifications (if available) and the briefing note approving funding for the grant program.

The FAQ document is typically accompanied by the grant program guidelines.

For more detailed information about compliance with grants administration requirements please refer to the [DCJ Grants Administration Guidelines](#).

For additional support about grant administration processes, contact the Grant Design and Support email grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au.

Grant program

The grant aims to enable the two Aboriginal Communities in Mogo and Toomelah to develop local emergency management plans and identify and implement local emergency management initiatives to build resilience to bushfires, storms, and pandemics. The project is a community led, co-designed project that supports these communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from natural disasters.

This is an Open Competitive Grant Program as per the NSW Grant Administration Guide section 6.5.1.

Aboriginal Community Control Organisations and Local Aboriginal Land Councils within the targeted Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Mogo and Toomelah will be open to apply for a funding pool of up to \$200,000.00 over 2 years.

It is recommended that these FAQs are read prior to completing an application for the Aboriginal Communities Disaster Preparedness Project Grant Program.

FAQ topics and questions

These FAQs are for the Aboriginal Communities Disaster Preparedness Project Grant Program and are intended to accompany the Aboriginal Communities Disaster Welfare Preparedness Project Grant Program Guidelines. Questions and answers below are grouped in topics in the same order as they appear in the Guidelines.

- Overview of the grant
 - What grant funds can be used for
 - Completing the application
 - Completing the application - one stage process
 - Other requirements
 - Assessment
 - Assessment process
 - After applications close
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Overview of the Grant

Q: What is the Aboriginal Communities Disaster Preparedness Project Grant Program?

A: The grant aims to enable the two Aboriginal Communities in Mogo and Toomelah to develop local emergency management plans and identify and implement local emergency management initiatives to build resilience to bushfires, storms, and pandemics. The project is a community led, co-designed project that supports these communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from natural disasters.

Q: What are the aims and objectives of the Program?

A: The Aboriginal Communities Disaster Preparedness Project aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Better prepare Aboriginal communities and local emergency management agencies to respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters.
- Identify and strengthen local partnerships that contribute to sustainable emergency management in Mogo and Toomelah communities.

- Create an environment where Aboriginal culture (including caring for Country Knowledge and practices) and emergency and disaster management practices are equally valued, championed and integrated into disaster preparation, response, and recovery.

Q: What kind of organisations are eligible to apply?

A: The following organisations are eligible to apply:

- Indigenous Corporations (must be registered with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations)
- NSW Local Aboriginal Land Councils

Note: for the purposes of this grant program, organisations deemed to be ‘incorporated not-for-profit community organisations’ include:

- incorporated organisations that are registered and approved as not-for-profit bodies by NSW Fair Trading
- not-for profit companies limited by guarantee, registered in NSW (must have ACNC registration and/or DGR status)
- associations (registered under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 with NSW Fair Trading)
- NSW Local Aboriginal Land Councils
- religious organisations operating in NSW
- NSW non-government organisations established under an Act of Parliament.

Q: Can not-for-profit groups make a joint application?

A: No, we will not be accepting joint applications.

Q: What are the funding amounts we can apply for?

A: Each Aboriginal Community Control Organisations or Local Aboriginal Land Councils can apply for funding up to \$100,000.00 over 2 years.

Q: Does the program include funding categories?

A: No

What grant funds can be used for

Q: What can we use the grant funds for?

A: Funds can only be used for expenses/activities directly associated to the project. The application must clearly outline your proposed expenditure in the budget you submit with your application.

- \$2500.00 to purchase IT/Office Equipment
- Minor expenses for service delivery such as purchasing phone credit or internet.
- Employment of a Community Engagement Officer Advisor up to 3 days a week (mandatory) in a temporary capacity for the duration of the project.

Q: What are we not allowed to spend grant funding on?

A: Organisations must not use the money provided for the project, nor any interest earned on the money, for any other purpose beyond what is specified in the approved project description

Items or activities that funding cannot be used for include:

- Repayment of existing debts or budget deficits.
- Financing of budget deficits or insurance
- Administrative, overhead, operational and/or maintenance costs not related to the project.
- Business as usual and/or commercial activities
- Salary/wages and no costs for existing, budgeted employees
- Cost related to buying or upgrading non-fixed equipment or supplies unless it is a small component of a larger project.
- Cost that require recurrent or ongoing funding from the NSW Government.

Q: Can we receive funding if we've already received an insurance payment, government grant or government funding?

A: No

Q: Can we apply for a project that has already started?

A: Typically, grant funds are not available for projects already in progress at the application stage

Q: How does reimbursement work?

A: This grant will not include a reimbursement process.

Q: Are we allowed to subcontract?

A: Subcontracting is not an option for this grant.

Q: Is subcontracting the same as auspicing?

A: Yes, Please note the term "subcontracting" is used for the purposes of this grant program.

Q: What does 'Minor expenses' mean?

A: An expense not budgeted or not specified, and the allowable items are:

- expenses for service delivery such as purchasing phone credit or internet.

Eligibility and assessment criteria

Q: What are the eligibility criteria?

A: All applicants are required to meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Indigenous Corporations (must be registered with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations)
- NSW Local Aboriginal Land Councils

Note:

The following are mandatory eligibility criteria. Further information is provided in sections below:

- all applicants must have appropriate insurance minimum of \$10 million.
- all applicants must address the NSW National Redress Scheme sanctions (included in this template), and
- applications will not be accepted from organisations that have outstanding acquittals with DCJ.
- Employment of a Community Engagement Officer Advisor up to 3 days a week in a temporary capacity for the duration of the project.

Q: What are the assessment criteria?

A: Eligible organisations must meet the following assessment criteria to be considered for funding:

The invited organisations will be assessed against the following assessment criteria:

Criteria	Specific Information and Evidence Required
Criterion 1: What is your project proposal	Applicant should demonstrate this through: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How will your proposal reach and benefit your community?• How will it improve community resilience and preparedness to bushfires, storms, and pandemics?
Criterion 2: Organisation’s capacity to deliver the project	Applicant should demonstrate this through: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proving experience managing previous projects and outcomes achieved; and/or• Demonstrating the resources possessed to deliver the project; and/or• Demonstrating the relevant training and experience of key staff involved in the project; and• Providing financial audits from the last financial year.
Criterion 3: Value for Money Description of criterion: How the implementation of the project/event/activity will achieve high quality outcomes for Aboriginal Communities in a cost-effective way.	Applicant should demonstrate this through providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarity on how budget items contribute to the project outcomes.• A reasonable and realistic itemised budget aligned with the project activities.

Q: Are there any funding priorities for the grants program?

A: Employment of a Community Engagement Officer Advisor up to 3 days a week (mandatory) in a temporary capacity for the duration of the project.

Completing the application

Q: Do I have to use SmartyGrants to apply?

A: Yes, applications for this program will only be accepted that are submitted via the SmartyGrants platform.

Q: Can I review the application form before starting my application?

A: Yes, when you log on to SmartyGrants and view the application you can also choose to download as a PDF to review whenever you like. You can also preview the form online. Please note that PDF copies of application forms do not show which questions are conditional, so you may see questions that do or do not apply to your organisation.

Q: Can I provide letters of support or references to support my application?

A: No, only your application form and any documents requested and submitted through the form on SmartyGrants will be considered.

Q: Is there support available to help me apply or answer questions?

A: The DCJ Grants team can assist organisations with any queries regarding the application process. Organisations can contact the Grant Design and Support at grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au. Please quote your Application ID in all correspondence. If you are not familiar with the SmartyGrants management system, please refer to the SmartyGrants Help Guide for Applicants or their general help page. You can also contact SmartyGrants directly if you are having technical difficulties with the application form or your SmartyGrants account/password, for contact details visit their help page.

Q: Can we submit more than one application?

A: No

Q. What is the difference between an ACCO and other organisations that serve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?

A: Please refer to our page on Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), which also provides information on our commitment to building the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector.

Q. Should we include GST in our application?

A: Your funding request should exclude any GST that you will be charged by contractors or suppliers as part of the cost/delivery. If your application is successful and your organisation's ABN is registered for GST, you will be paid GST on top of the approved grant amount. If your organisation ABN is not registered for GST or you do not have an ABN, you will only be paid the approved grant amount.

Q: Who needs to sign off on our application?

A: The Applicant Declaration must be made by two of your organisation's authorised signatories, who will also be responsible for signing the Grant Funding Agreement via Adobe Acrobat Sign should your application be successful. More information on DCJ authorised signatories is available on the DCJ website. Please note, you must provide the contact details (email address, phone number, name and position) of the relevant authorised signatories, or their delegates, in your application form. Please contact grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au immediately if these details change.

Q: Why would we want to provide the details of a third (optional) person in our application form to view the Grant Funding Agreement?

A: DCJ administers Grant Funding Agreements to successful organisations via Adobe Acrobat Sign, which only allows those who receive an individualised link to access the document for viewing. Therefore, all of those who wish to either sign or view the Grant Funding Agreement must provide their contact details. You may wish to include any relevant legal or administrative staff to review a copy of the Grant Funding Agreement before it is signed.

Q: Can value-in-kind be considered as funding contributed by a not-for-profit organisation?

A: Yes. Donated materials and contributions by paid staff and volunteers of the organisation are allowed as part of the not-for-profit organisation's contribution to the cost of a project. The estimated value of these contributions should be provided in the project budget.

Q: Is it too late to apply?

A: Applications that are late or incorrectly filled out or incomplete will not be accepted.

Other requirements

Q: What insurance is my organisation required to maintain?

A: Your organisation:

- is required to provide a valid Certificate of Currency for Public Liability Insurance with a minimum cover of \$10 million in your organisation's name, which you will upload as part of your application
- must retain any other insurance required under Commonwealth and NSW law for the performance of its activities funded by this grant, if successful
- is responsible for ensuring it has appropriate and current insurance coverage in place to cover any liability of the grant recipient that might arise in connection with the performance of its obligations under its Grant Funding Agreement, which includes activities carried out by any other individual or organisation that you may subcontract.

Q: What is the NSW National Redress Scheme?

A: The National Redress Scheme is part of the Commonwealth Government's response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The National Redress Scheme provides support to people who experienced institutional child sexual abuse.

The Scheme:

- Acknowledges that many children were sexually abused in Australian institutions.
- Holds institutions accountable for this abuse; and
- Helps people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse gain access to counselling, a direct personal response, and a Redress payment.

The Scheme started on 1 July 2018 and will run for 10 years. The NSW Government will not award a grant to a non-government organisation with Redress Obligation (or to any of its Related Entities) if that non-government organisation:

- Has declined to join the Scheme, or
- At the expiry of six months after the time it is notified to join the Scheme, has failed to do so.

For further information please visit the NSW National Redress Scheme Sanctions Policy webpage.

Q: Do I need to provide banking details?

A: Yes. It is your responsibility to provide the correct banking details, including the authorised signature to verify your bank details, in your application form. Funds transferred to an incorrect bank account may not be recoverable. This applies even if you have provided your banking details to DCJ in the past or are currently receiving other payments from DCJ.

Q: Why should I keep my contact details up to date?

A: Your application, Grant Funding Agreement and acquittal for the grants will be managed using the SmartyGrants online grants administration system. We will contact you and your organisation's authorised signatories using the details provided in your application on SmartyGrants.

It is the responsibility of the grant recipient to keep DCJ up to date with any change in contact information, including the contact details of authorised signatories. DCJ is not responsible for any consequences should your grant offer be withdrawn due to out-of-date contact details in SmartyGrants. Please email grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au to update contact details.

Completing the application - one stage process

In grant programs where only the one application form is used, the following process is typical:

- You can log in to SmartyGrants on the link provided.
 - You are not required to complete your application in one sitting and can save and return at a later date to complete and submit.
 - Once your application has been submitted you will receive an automated response from SmartyGrants. If you have not received this email, your application has not been successfully submitted, or the confirmation email has ended up in your junk mailbox.
 - You can also log in to the online system and click 'My Submissions' to view all submitted and unsubmitted applications. Submitted applications are identified by a green tick. Carefully check your application prior to submitting. If you realise that you have made an error once you have submitted your application, please contact grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au for assistance before the closing date.
 - Applications that are late or incorrectly filled out or incomplete will not be accepted'.
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Assessment process

Q: What is the assessment process?

A: The assessment process for a one stage application:

1. DCJ eligibility team conducts a review to ensure eligibility the eligibility criteria listed above and general compliance with guidelines.
 2. DCJ assessment team will assess each eligible application against the assessment criteria listed above and make recommendations for the final decision maker.
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After applications close

Q: What happens when you receive my application?

A: Applicants will be formally notified by February 2025 if their application has been successful or unsuccessful. Applicants must ensure their contact details on SmartyGrants remain up to date.

Q: Will the information in my application be kept confidential?

A: Information received in applications and in respect of applications is treated as confidential, and all assessors will sign a confidentiality agreement before reviewing your application. However, documents in the possession of the government are subject to the provisions of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*. If you are successful, the NSW Government may share or publicise information on your program. An agreement that this may occur will form part of your Grants Funding Agreement.

Q: When will I know if my application was successful?

A: You will be notified via email by February 2025. Applicants must ensure their contact details on SmartyGrants remain up to date.

Q: If I'm successful, what happens then?

A: You will be notified via email by February 2025 and shortly after a Grant Funding Agreement will be sent via Adobe Acrobat Sign to the authorised signatories, and any additional reviewers, as provided in your application form. Successful applicants are required to return the signed Funding Agreement within seven days of receipt.

Grant Funding Agreements can only be signed by authorised officers of your organisation. This may be a member of the executive/committee as deemed under the Articles of Association or Constitution if you are a not-for-profit organisation. Please refer to the following for further details on authorised signatories and delegation. Please note, you must provide the contact details (email address, phone number, name, and position) of the relevant authorised signatories, or their delegates, in your application form. Please contact grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au immediately if these details change. It is your responsibility to ensure staff availability to complete and sign documents, to carefully read the terms and conditions of the Grant Funding Agreement, and to sign the Grant Funding Agreement using the correct authorised signatories. Once we receive your signed Funding Agreement via DocuSign or Adobe Acrobat Sign, your Grant Funding Agreement will be countersigned and sent to you by email.

Q: What happens if situations change, and we wish to change the details of our program after we receive funding?

A: Any major variations to the approved purposes outlined in your original application form on SmartyGrants must be formally requested and approved in writing before any related work takes place, as your application form will form part of your legally binding Grant Funding Agreement with DCJ. Failure to do so may result in you being required to return the grant monies in full. To discuss a variation, please contact the Grants team by email grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au.

Q: What reporting will be required?

Successful applicants will need to submit quarterly reports, mid-term reports or others as applicable.

Q: What acquittals requirements?

A: Successful applicants will be required to submit a simple financial acquittal by July 2026. The acquittal will include an expenditure breakdown on:

- Staffing costs
- Reimbursement
- Minor equipment and assets

- Operational costs
- Minor expenses for individuals

An officeholder in your organisation will be required to certify that the grant funds have been expended as per your financial acquittal.

Q: Why was my application not successful?

A: If your application is not successful, it does not mean your application is without merit. Funding is limited and not all applications are successful. Due to the high volume, DCJ is unable to provide individual feedback on each unsuccessful application.

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