

Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program Guidelines

Grant Program Guidelines

March 2025

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 document.

We advise this resource may contain images, or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

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This artwork, titled "Brighter Ways" was created by the talented Kurna and Narungga artist, Charmaine Mumbulla. It reflects the DCJ Transforming Aboriginal Outcomes Division and reminds us that DCJ performs its work on land that always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

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1 Key dates and Information

Grant Application Opens	24 March 2025
Grant Application Closes	28 April 2025 at 4:00pm
Assessment of submitted applications	May 2025
Notification of application outcomes	May 2025
Grant program results announced by Minister	May 2025
Grant program results published	June 2025
Projects commence	1 July 2025
Projects concludes	30 June 2026
Final report and Financial Acquittal due to DCJ	31 July 2026
Decision-maker	Minister Harrison or the Delegated decision maker
NSW Government Agency	NSW Department of Communities and Justice
Type of grant opportunity	Open, competitive
Grant value (total available funding for the grant and the available individual grant amounts, excluding GST)	\$3.9m
Enquiries	TAOFamilyViolence@dcj.nsw.gov.au



2 Overview

2.1 Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program Guidelines

The Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program Guidelines contain information to assist potential applicants to complete the application. It includes an overview of the Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program, information about the application process, eligibility, and assessment criteria, how the funds can and cannot be used, and reporting requirements.

Read these guidelines before completing your application for the Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program.

2.1.1 Purpose of the Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program

The NSW Government is investing up to \$3.9M (excl GST) to:

- fund a range of one-off and/or time-limited projects that respond to domestic, family and sexual violence in Aboriginal communities in NSW.
- provide opportunities to Aboriginal entities to deliver services and supports to Aboriginal people who have experienced or at risk of experiencing DFSV.
- promote wellbeing and safety for Aboriginal individuals, families and communities at risk of or experiencing DFSV.

The program will align to the key focus areas and principles of the upcoming NSW Aboriginal Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFSV) plan (currently in development) and will focus on supporting:

- the Aboriginal community-controlled sector and Aboriginal service providers to implement focus areas aligned to the upcoming dedicated NSW Aboriginal DFSV Plan and the National and State plans:
 - [National Plan to End Violence against Women and their Children 2022-2032](#)
 - [NSW Domestic and Family Violence Plan and NSW Sexual Violence Plan 2022-2027](#); and
 - [National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Nations Action plan 2023-2025](#),
 - [Pathways to Prevention: NSW Strategy for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence 2024-2028](#).
- self-determination, community capacity building and economic uplift.

2.1.2 Objectives and outcomes

The NSW Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program aims to provide opportunities to Aboriginal entities to deliver services and supports to Aboriginal people who have experienced or at risk of experiencing DFSV.

This program supports the [First Action Plan 2023-2027](#) under the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032. It aims to strengthen support for people experiencing violence and people who use violence and their families and increase funding for Aboriginal organisations, in line with Closing the Gap Priority Reform Areas.

Projects are to assist with:

- self-determination by empowering Aboriginal communities to lead and deliver services.
- early intervention of DFSV.

- primary prevention of DFSV.
- healing and recovery for people experiencing and those who use violence.
- responding and creating safety for Aboriginal individuals, families, and communities.

Projects will need to contribute to the following:

- Deliver age-appropriate, culturally safe programs that support recovery and healing from trauma, and address violence-supportive behaviours early.
- Deliver culturally safe responses to people experiencing or at risk of experiencing DFSV.
- Improve responses to family violence and abuse against Aboriginal women and children.
- Deliver culturally safe responses to Aboriginal men and boys who use or at risk of using violence.
- Develop and uplift local, culturally informed practices to inform long-term solutions for safety and violence reduction.
- Enhance the capacity of services to provide trauma-informed, connected, and coordinated responses, supporting long-term recovery, health, and wellbeing.
- Promote safety and wellbeing for Aboriginal individuals, families, and community members.
- Support education and awareness to prevent and respond to DFSV.
- Implement, research and map activity for primary prevention initiatives and responses for Aboriginal communities.

2.1.3 Priority group

The NSW Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program will provide grants to support projects focusing on the following Aboriginal groups:

- Women and girls
- Victims/survivors of domestic/family violence
- Victims/survivors of sexual violence
- Children and young people
- LGBTIQ+ (Brotherboys and Sistergirls)
- Elders
- Rural and remote communities
- People who use violence
- People with disability
- Men and boys.

2.2 Funding amounts

One-off funding for 12 months is available to recipients.

There will be three funding categories available to apply for:

- Category 1: grants up to \$10,000
- Category 2: grant amounts \$10,001 - \$75,000
- Category 3: \$75,001 - \$150,000

More than one application can be submitted for different funding categories, but each application must be for a different project. Grant funding must be spent by 30 July 2026.

DCJ may also offer successful applicants a package lower than the amount requested.

The total funding to be allocated by DCJ across all categories is \$3.9M over 12 months.

3 Eligibility Criteria

3.1 Eligible applicants

To be eligible to apply for the grant program you must be:

- a not-for-profit Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) which includes
 - Indigenous Corporations (must be registered with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations);
 - the NSW Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC);
 - Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of NSW (AH&MRC);
 - National Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), or
- an Aboriginal specific organisation or sole provider (at least 50% owned and run), or
- Aboriginal business working with Aboriginal communities in NSW, or
- a not-for-profit non-Aboriginal organisation partnering with a lead ACCO or Aboriginal business.

And one of the following organisation types, in a partnership with an Aboriginal organisation (for non-Aboriginal agencies):

- incorporated organisation registered and approved as not-for-profit body by NSW Fair Trading
- not-for profit company limited by guarantee, registered in NSW (must have ACNC registration and/or DGR status)
- religious organisation operating in NSW
- NSW Local Council operating under the Local Government Act 1993
- NSW non-government organisation established under their own Act of Parliament.

3.1.1 Other Eligible Applicants

- An Aboriginal sole trader or business with an ABN and the primary business activity relates to delivering services to Aboriginal communities - also noting the project must not be profit making in nature.
- A not-for-profit unincorporated Aboriginal community group (can only apply for Category 1).
- A not-for-profit unincorporated Aboriginal community group in partnership with a not-for-profit subcontracting organisation if applying for Category 2 or 3 funding.

3.1.2 Mandatory Eligibility Criteria

Applicants or their partnering organisation must:

- address the NSW National Redress Scheme sanctions.
- not have outstanding acquittals with DCJ.
- be an organisation based in NSW for projects to be carried out in NSW.

- maintain adequate and current insurance cover including, but not limited to; Workers Compensation Insurance, Professional Indemnity Insurance, Personal Accident Insurance.
 - have public liability insurance of at least \$10 million per claim or be willing to purchase it. For the purposes of the project, it can be included in the project budget as part of the administration costs.
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3.2 Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations

‘Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations’ as defined by clause 44 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap which states that:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community control is an act of self-determination. Under this Agreement, an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Organisation delivers services, including land and resource management that builds the strength and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people and is:

- incorporated under relevant legislation and not-for-profit
- controlled and operated by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people
- connected to the community, or communities, in which they deliver the services
- governed by a majority Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander governing body.

Please see the link for further information on how DCJ defines and works with [Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations](#).

3.3 Partnership Applications

Projects delivered by a group of organisations or partnership must have an Aboriginal lead applicant. The lead applicant must be an eligible entity included in the list of eligible organisations mentioned above.

Non-lead partner can include:

- NSW Government agencies and Local Government Councils
- Unincorporated community groups
- Non-profit organisations
- For-profit organisations providing pro bono services, and/or
- Other eligible organisations listed above.

In partnership applications, DCJ will only provide a grant to a single eligible organisation. Organisations can work together through one lead organisation using subcontracting arrangements between them, if required. The lead applicant will have to demonstrate their legal status as mentioned above and should demonstrate the capacity and capability to establish, manage and be held accountable for the delivery of the project and intended outcomes, including reporting on the progress of the project. Notional allocations to partner organisations, if any, should be included in the application. For more information about subcontracting please refer to the DCJ Subcontracting policy.

Note for partner applications only – applicants will need to submit a letter of understanding jointly signed by all partners.

4 Assessment Criteria

4.1 Assessment of grant applications

This is an open and competitive grants program. All submitted applications will be assessed and scored against the eligibility criteria.

All eligible applications must meet the following assessment criteria to be considered for funding:

1. **Relevance:** The project aligns with the goals of the grant program and meets the specific DFSV needs of local Aboriginal communities.
2. **Impact:** The project will produce clear, positive results. You need to show proof of past and current success, or the potential to achieve these results.
3. **Implementation:** The applicant has the necessary skills and expertise to complete the project on time and within budget, ensuring good participation and value for money.

4.1.1 Prioritisation

The Aboriginal priority groups are one or more of the following:

- Victims/survivors of domestic/family violence
- Victims/survivors of sexual violence
- Women and girls
- Children and young people
- LGBTIQ+ (Brotherboys and Sistergirls)
- Elders
- Rural and remote communities
- People who use violence
- People with disability.
- Men and boys.

Applications may also be prioritised geographically to support an equitable spread of funds and projects across NSW.

4.1.2 Decision making

All submitted applications will be assessed against eligibility and assessment criteria. An Assessment Panel will assess the applications.

The Panel will make a recommendation to the Delegated officer as per the Decision Makers approval.

The delegated decision maker will consider the Assessment Panel's recommendations.

Partial funding may be offered where an application includes ineligible activities or budget items.

5 Grant funds expenditure

Funds can only be used for expenses/activities directly associated to the grant. Your application must clearly outline your proposed expenditure in relation to the funding amounts identified above and included in the budget you submit with your application.

5.1 Grant fund exclusions

Organisations must use the grant funds, including any interest earned, for the purposes of the grant.

Items or activities that funding cannot be used for including:

- Any activity of a commercial nature that is for profit
 - Existing debt or budget deficits
 - Capital works, including building work
 - Permanent salaries/wages (costs for temporary tutors/instructors for your program or activity can be included)
 - Permanent equipment purchases (unless considered Minor Equipment)
 - Purchase of vehicles
 - Business as usual costs or general operating expenses
 - Programs or activities that encourage gambling such as bingo, or the consumption of alcohol
 - Programs and activities coordinated by NSW Government Departments and Statutory Authorities
 - The same project twice. For example, two different organisations cannot apply for funds for the same program or activity.
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6 Application process

One step application process:

One application form submitted by the applicant will be assessed based on eligibility and assessment criteria.

Smarty Grants will be used to support the application process. The DCJ Grants team can assist organisations with any queries regarding the application process. Organisations can contact via email 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 check out [Applicant FAQs](#). You can also contact SmartyGrants directly if you are having technical difficulties with the application form or your SmartyGrants account/password, email service@smartygrants.com.au.

Note for all applicants:

- Applicants must ensure that their contact details are up to date.
- Applicants must not have any outstanding acquittals for any other funding program with DCJ.
- All applications for grant funding are managed using the Smarty Grants portal.

6.1 Summary of assessment process:

Applications will be reviewed by the eligibility team for eligibility and compliance with guidelines and eligible criteria. They will then be subject to the assessment process which will include assessment by the Assessment Team and Assessment Panel.

The Minister or delegated DCJ officer will be the decision-maker.

Applicants will be formally notified on whether their application has been successful. It is an applicant's responsibility to ensure all contact details are up to date.

Note for all applicants:

- Applicants must ensure that their contact details are up to date.
- Applicants must not have any outstanding acquittals for any other funding program with DCJ.

6.2 NSW National Redress Scheme sanctions

The NSW Government will not award a Grant Funding Arrangement 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.

Visit the [website](#) for further information about the [NSW National Redress Scheme](#) sanctions.

6.3 Insurance

Grant recipients must maintain current and adequate insurance appropriate to the activities/services funded under this grant to cover any liability of the grant recipient that might arise in connection with the performance of its obligations under a Grant Funding Agreement. This must include a minimum of \$10 million Public Liability Insurance or a willingness to purchase it. For the purposes of the project, it can be included in the project budget as part of the administration costs.

Applicants may be asked to provide a copy of all relevant insurance policies and certificates in the application form.

6.4 Banking details

It is your responsibility as the applicant to provide correct banking details, including the authorised signature to verify your bank details in the application form. Funds transferred to an incorrect bank account may not be recoverable.

6.5 Successful applicants – grant funding agreement.

- The application, Grant Funding Agreement and acquittal for the grant will be managed using the SmartyGrants management system and Adobe Acrobat Sign.
- Successful applicants are required to return the signed Grant Funding Agreement within two weeks of receipt.

- 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 for a not-for-profit organisation, or the General Manager or delegated officer if you are a council.
 - Please note, all applicants must provide the contact details (email address, phone number, name, and position) of the relevant authorised signatories, or their delegates, in their application form.
 - It is the applicants' 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 Grant Funding Agreement via Adobe Acrobat Sign, DCJ will countersign the agreement and return to you by email.
 - Any variations to the Grant Funding Agreement, including scope, location or time frames outlined in the application form and Grant Program Guidelines must be formally requested and approved in writing. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of the grant offer.
 - To discuss a variation, please contact by email the Transforming Aboriginal Outcomes Family Violence team TAOFamilyViolence@dcj.nsw.gov.au OR the Grants team grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au.
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6.6 Successful applicants' obligations and reporting

- Any variations to the approved project scope, project location and completion time frames outlined in the original application form must be formally requested and approved in writing before any related work takes place.
- To discuss a variation, please contact by email the Transforming Aboriginal Outcomes Family Violence team TAOFamilyViolence@dcj.nsw.gov.au OR the Grant Design team grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au.
- All projects must be completed by 30 June 2026. You are required to submit a Final Report and Financial Acquittal in SmartyGrants no later than 31 July 2026. DCJ will request information regarding the increase in services and/or additional services that were delivered because of your grant funding. DCJ will send you the final acquittal form prior the required date that you will need to complete in the SmartyGrants portal.
- Please note that any photographs or videos containing images of participants and/or staff submitted in the Final Completion Report must be accompanied by a signed [DCJ still and moving images consent form](#).
- It is a requirement that all financial records related to grant expenditure and acquittal be retained by the committee of the organisation for seven years. If the committee changes, these documents must be forwarded to the new incoming committee.

7 Prepare to submit your application

Before you start your application, please review the [Aboriginal Community Safety Grant Program FAQ](#).

8 Feedback and appeals process

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 applications, we are unable to provide individual feedback on each unsuccessful application.

Communities and Justice

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