



Department of Regional NSW

Our Region, Our Voice - Regional Youth Investment Project

Program Guidelines

nsw.gov.au/RegionalYouthInvestmentProgram



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Photo credit: Steven Abraham

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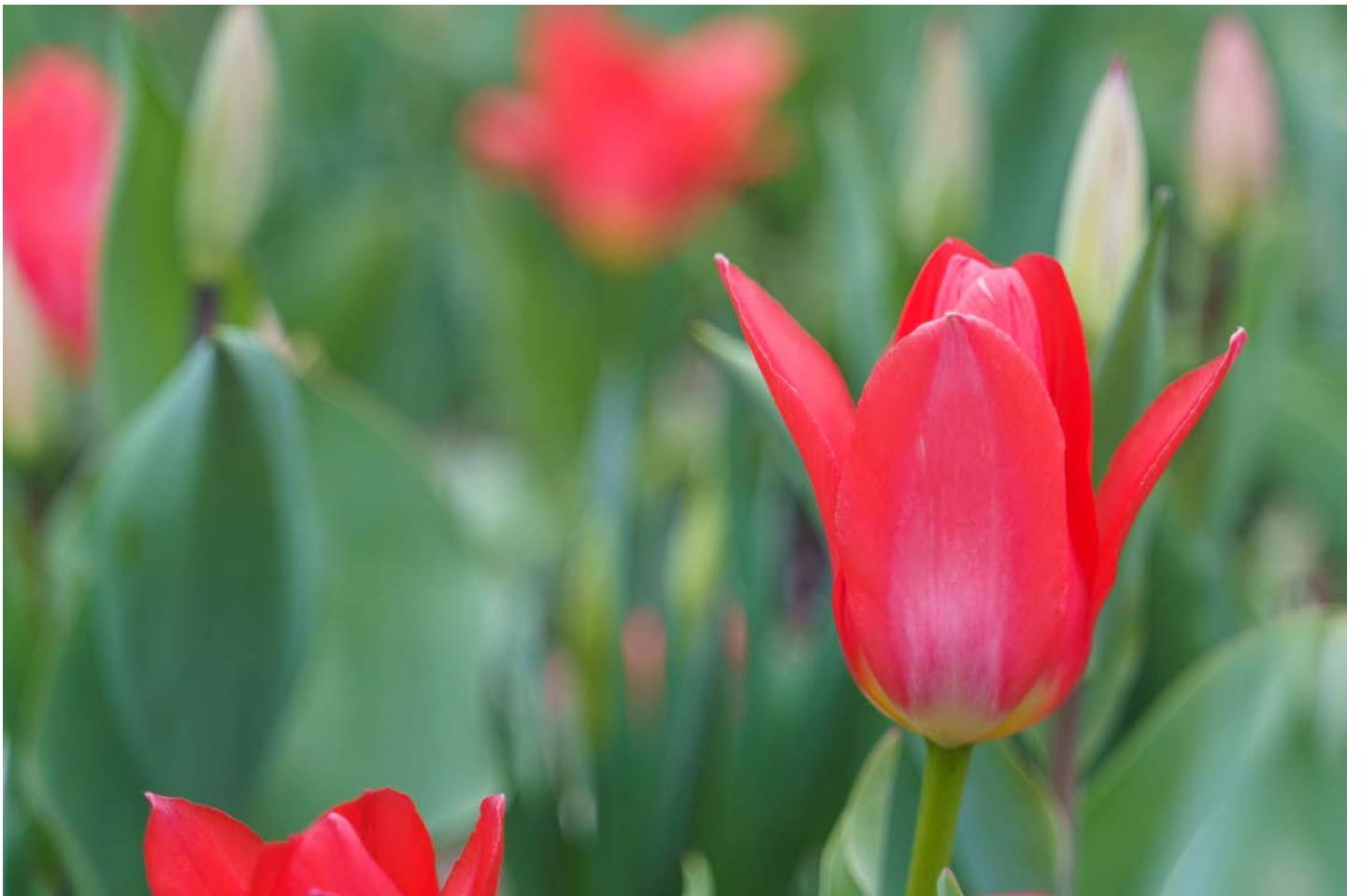


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Message from the Minister



Young people represent the future of our State and are key to maintaining vibrant regional communities. That's why the Regional Youth portfolio was formed in 2019 and the NSW Government has been working hard to deliver on its commitment to support our regional youth.

The Our Region, Our Voice-Regional Youth Investment Program represents a record investment from the NSW Government in regional young people. It supports and strengthens the NSW Government's vision to ensure all regional young people have opportunities for meaningful work and education, accessible healthcare, and feel part of vibrant and inclusive communities.

Through this program, the Office for Regional Youth will collaborate with partners to deliver targeted initiatives that ensure regional youth reach their full potential in their local communities without having to relocate to a metropolitan area.

The initiatives developed under the program will focus on priority areas, which have emerged from the Regional Youth Framework's key pillars of Work-Ready, Wellbeing, Community and Connectivity. These have been reinforced and given greater depth and nuance by consulting with 2000 young people across regional NSW.

These priorities include:

- Developing clear career pathways
- Ensuring mental health services are easily accessible
- Supporting delivery of recreational activities and events
- Supporting reliable and convenient transport
- Ensuring access to secure and affordable housing

Our research shows that young people can experience challenges differently depending on their location in a region, and the Our Region, Our Voice-Regional Youth Investment Program will enable initiatives that are place-based and responsive to local needs.

This program will help to ensure that regional young people have all the tools they need to grow into their best selves, and that our regional communities are equipped to deliver them.

I am proud to lead the Our Region, Our Voice-Regional Youth Investment Program and I'm excited to see how the NSW Government can deliver for our regional youth over the next two years.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Franklin'.

The Hon. Ben Franklin, MLC
*Minister for Aboriginal Affairs,
Minister for Regional Youth,
Minister for Tourism*

Overview

The Our Region, Our Voice -Regional Youth Investment Program was established in June 2022 by the NSW Government to deliver tailored investments and local projects that enhance the lives and wellbeing of regional youth and support them to live their best life and thrive within their local communities.

Stage 1 of the program will see up to \$40 million made available for community projects that align with the NSW Regional Youth Framework which provides a whole-of-government approach to address issues facing regional young people and improve economic and social outcomes. The framework guides the work of the Office for Regional Youth and is structured around the four 'pillars' of: Work Ready, Wellbeing, Connectivity and Community. The framework may be [accessed here](#).

Our Voice, Our Region was developed in consultation with nearly 2,000 young people across eight regions of regional NSW to ensure that the investment is centred on the voices of regional young people, advocating for what they need and want to live their best lives.

Young people (aged 12-24yrs old) across regional NSW face distinct challenges across the four pillars of the framework and experience gaps in service provision. As a result, outcomes for regional youth lag behind those of metropolitan youth across many indicators. The program directs resources to regional specific place-based strategies that will make the difference needed to address the unique challenges encountered by regional youth and maximise local opportunities.

Our Region, Our Voice -Regional Youth Investment Program is administered by the Office for Regional Youth which is within the Department of Regional NSW.

Objectives

The objective of the program is to genuinely reflect the needs and aspirations of regional young people in NSW to:

1. Learn, work and achieve in regional NSW
2. Be mentally and physically healthy, safe and thrive in their communities
3. Explore their creativity, collaborate with other young people, develop a sense of achievement and feel socially and culturally connected to their communities
4. Have transport and digital connectivity solutions to access training, work services and recreational activities; and
5. Be place based and reflect the diversity of young people's needs across regional NSW



Photo credit: Matese Fields

Key dates

Applications open:

1 September 2022

Applications close:

4 October 2022 at 10am AEST

Webinar dates:

6 September 2022

Application outcome :

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application confidentially by letter before 25 November 2022

Contracting:

Successful applicants must sign and return a Letter of Offer and Confidentiality Agreement. They will then enter a Funding Deed.

Announcements:

The NSW Government will announce grant information within 45 days of a Funding Deed being executed by both parties.

Project Commencement and Completion:

The project must commence within three months of both parties executing the Funding Deed and be completed within two-years.

In extenuating circumstances, late applications may be accepted at the sole discretion of the Department of Regional NSW.



Program funding



There is up to \$40 million available for eligible projects. This funding will be allocated across nine investment themes, aligned with the four pillars of the framework.

The program's funding is available for projects which address the investment themes detailed in the following table:

Regional Youth Framework Pillar	Investment theme	Purpose of projects under the investment theme
Work Ready	Education	Projects to enhance high school engagement and retention
	Skills	Projects to develop work ready skills, knowledge and networks
Wellbeing	Health	Projects to increase access and quality of health services
	Inclusivity	Projects to increase provision of youth and culturally appropriate health services
Connectivity	Transport	Projects to improve access to public and private transport
	Digital	Projects to improve access to digital technology and digital skills
Community	Belonging	Projects to provide greater diversity of community youth projects
	Agency	Projects to provide support to at risk-youth
	Housing	Projects to support young people secure affordable housing

Applications are not restricted to the top or secondary priorities. Applications which address any of the nine investment themes are welcomed and encouraged.

Grant amounts



All grant amounts must be within the following grant funding ranges:

Minimum grant funding	Maximum grant funding
\$150,000	\$3,000,000

Co-contributions and cooperative project delivery is not required but are welcomed and strongly encouraged. This may include in-kind support and/or funding from other sources. Evidence of co-contributions is required as part of application where relevant.

Unspent funds

If the situation arises where a grant recipient's project is completed and there are unspent funds remaining from the grant allocation, requests to utilise the funds to extend the scope of the project will be assessed by The Department of Regional NSW only for purposes that align to objectives of the grant program and must be accompanied by supporting information such as revised economic or social impact data.



Photo credit from top: Simon Maage,
Christian Bowen and Tegan Mierle

Eligibility



Eligibility criteria

There are three aspects to the eligibility criteria:

1. An applicant must be an eligible applicant; and
2. An eligible applicant must apply for a grant of funding for an eligible project; and
3. An eligible project must be within an eligible project location(s)

Eligible applicants

To be eligible under the program, the applicant must be one of the following:

- a local government recognised under relevant NSW legislation (excluding Greater Sydney Wollongong and Newcastle) local government areas
- regional joint organisation of councils
- Section 355 Committees of Councils must apply in the name of the relevant Council and must have permission to apply
- not-for-profit and community organisations registered with the Australian Charities and not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)
- an association registered with NSW Fair Trading under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009
- an incorporated entity with an Australian Business Number (ABN) or an Australian Company Number (ACN)
- a Local Aboriginal Land Council
- the Lord Howe Island Board
- an unincorporated Far West group

Unless specifically listed above all other unincorporated entities and individuals are ineligible to apply.

Applicants are not required to be located within an eligible project location however should ensure that all relevant permissions are obtained. It is advisable to include letters of support in the application, to demonstrate the project need in that location.

Councils are encouraged to work with community groups to identify priority projects and should consider project partnerships where council is the landowner.

Landowner consent is required for any new infrastructure projects or projects in which applicants are not the landowner. All applicants will be solely responsible for the project's delivery and reporting through a Funding Deed.

Applicants are encouraged to work with key local stakeholders including their local Members of Parliament, local council and key youth organisations to identify priority projects in their Local Government Area to ensure projects with high community support from young people are submitted. Letters of support are encouraged from all local stakeholders to strengthen applications.

Applicants must have or be able and willing to purchase at least \$20 million public liability insurance.

Eligible project locations

Projects must be in one of the 93 regional NSW Local Government Areas, Lord Howe Island or the Unincorporated Far West. Projects in the Greater Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong Local Government Areas are not eligible.

Eligible projects

Projects must be for initiatives that boost and support regional youth's work-readiness, wellbeing, physical or digital connectivity or links to the community. Successful projects will address one or more of the investment themes identified by the Office for Regional Youth.

A project must be for:

- delivering projects that benefit the local youth community and provide public benefit to young people (this is not limited to physical projects and can include teaching, life skills etc.)
- fit out of or upgrades to existing, local community infrastructure to assist the delivery of general or targeted youth community projects
- infrastructure to assist the delivery of targeted youth community projects
- community projects and infrastructure which assist in improvement and promotion of accessibility and inclusion for youth
- community projects and infrastructure which assist in improvement of community participation, liveable communities and accessibility and inclusion outcomes for youth

Projects must deliver benefits and outcomes that contribute to the program objectives. Applicants will be expected to establish monitoring procedures to demonstrate the delivery of the expected outcomes.

Projects can demonstrate public benefit by showing how the project will benefit the youth generally, or a targeted cohort of youth. Similarly, while projects can be located on private land they must be for the public benefit.

The applicant will need to show how the facility will be open to the community.



Photo credit: Gian Cescon

Projects which aim to improve outcomes for priority groups of young people

The Office for Regional Youth recognises that each young person is unique and regional communities are diverse. Some young people have specific service and accessibility needs when accessing services within their local communities.

To meet the diverse needs of young people living in Regional NSW, applicants are encouraged to deliver projects that cater for the needs of regional youth with priority given to projects that target one or more of the cohorts below:

- Aboriginal young people
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse young people
- Young people from a refugee background
- LGBTQIA+ young people
- Young people living with disability
- Young people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage
- Young people living in remote NSW

All applicants under this program must ensure that their proposed projects are culturally safe, respectful and inclusive for all young people.

Projects that seek to improve outcomes for priority groups of young people must align with the skills, aspirations and experiences of young people in these priority groups.

Regional NSW is home to two-thirds of NSW's Aboriginal youth. The Office for Regional Youth and the NSW Government are actively focused on enhancing opportunities for regional Aboriginal young people in partnership with community. Applicants are encouraged to deliver projects to deliver positive impact on social and economic outcomes for Aboriginal young people.

Applicants must consider supporting regional communities to future proof infrastructure and projects by funding universally designed projects. Where possible, projects should move beyond current day compliance standards and provide dignified and equitable inclusion to social and community projects for people with disability. This applies to both infrastructure projects and community or social projects aiming to improve existing accessibility and inclusion to encourage greater participation. Applicants must demonstrate inclusion and accessibility measures in their application.



Photo credit: Brooklyn Morgan, Tanya Pro and Arthur Poulin

Ineligible Projects

Projects are not eligible for funding if they are:

- located outside an eligible project location
- not submitted by an eligible applicant
- for the delivery of essential or core government services that should be funded from another source such as local government, the NSW Government or the Commonwealth Government
- seeking retrospective funding to cover projects that are already complete
- seeking grant funding for ongoing staff or operational costs beyond two years
- seeking grant funding for existing staff
- for a general works package without specific scope, costs and location (e.g. 'upgrading lighting at community youth centre without identifying the work required, number of sites or the locations)
- predominantly for marketing, branding, advertising or product promotion including tourism marketing
- providing direct commercial and/or exclusive private benefit to an individual or business
- not clearly providing benefits that will significantly contribute to the objectives of the program
- the recipient of any grant funding from another NSW Government grant program for the same project.
- projects that seek to solely subsidise memberships for existing services.

Eligible project costs

Project costs may include those associated with:



fit out or upgrade of existing infrastructure which assist in the delivery of projects

Design including regulatory application and approval costs, must be listed as administration costs.

Applicants may include up to 10% of the total project cost for contingency.



delivering projects and events

Unused budget contingency costs will be deducted from the final grant payment.



the purchase of materials and equipment essential to projects delivery

Table One: Examples of eligible projects and project costs:

Community projects and events	Fit out or upgrade of community amenity and community service infrastructure that support the delivery of youth projects
<p>Work Ready</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects and events that promote career pathways including work experience, mentoring, career awareness and advice. Workshops and events that teach life skills including digital and financial literacies, interpersonal and leadership capabilities, and personal care such as cooking and gardening. <p>Wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects and events that promote mental and physical wellbeing Workshops and events to build resilience and capability such as mental health first aid training. Extension of hours or transport to health services Increased awareness and navigation of local mental health supports <p>Connectivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects and events that improve access to driver training Workshops and events to build digital capabilities Projects that improve transport options for young people <p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project and events that provide recreational and social opportunities for young people Projects that promote inclusivity, social cohesion, safety and leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth centres and dedicated youth spaces in halls and libraries Recreation facilities Murals or community art installations Seating, planting boxes, landscaping and paving Street lighting to improve safety Shade cloth, awnings and pergolas that assist the delivery of youth projects Public toilets Provision of a sensory room Equipment upgrade to local youth radio station facilities Infrastructure upgrades to support and improve accessibility to community facilities for youth Non fixed assets that enhance accessibility and inclusion. Examples include beach access mats, pool hoists, portable changing places amenities and adaptive sporting equipment such as court-based wheelchairs which are required to support the delivery of projects.

*Please note that the examples provided in Table One are suggestions only and other projects that meet the program objectives are welcomed.

Ineligible project costs

Ineligible project costs include:

- costs related to buying or upgrading non-fixed equipment or supplies, unless considered essential to program delivery or accessibility equipment and are incidental costs to the overall project budget
- purchase of laptops, mobile phones and other capital items unless considered essential to program delivery and are incidental costs to the overall project budget
- costs relating to the purchase of vehicles, buses, boats, trailers, motorhomes, or other modes of transportation unless considered essential to program delivery and are incidental costs to the overall project budget
- purchase of land or buildings
- financing, including debt financing or rental costs
- costs relating to depreciation of plant and equipment beyond the life of the project
- non-project related staff training and development costs
- ongoing/recurrent funding that is required beyond the stated timeframe of the project
- funding for ongoing staff or operational costs beyond the 2-year period
- project management or contingency costs that exceed the eligibility requirements



Photo credit: Anderson Schmig,
Andrew Solok and Josh Campbell

Assessment



Assessment criteria

Only applications from eligible applicants who have proposed eligible projects within eligible locations will proceed to assessment against the assessment criteria. Applications that are either from ineligible applicants or for ineligible projects (or both) will not progress to assessment against the assessment criteria.

The Department of Regional NSW may also in its absolute discretion, consider additional factors when assessing eligible applications.

1. Desirability

The Office for Regional Youth has engaged in consultations with regional young people to put young people's voices at the centre of investment decisions, understand the most important issues for young people in each region and direct investment strategies towards regional specific place-based initiatives. that will improve outcomes for regional youth.

A comprehensive multi-model approach leveraging Office for Regional Youth networks and external market research firms was deployed to collect state-wide and region-specific insights from nearly 2,000 young people across NSW. Evidence-based priority areas for each region were developed through triangulating the input from in-person engagements with over 650 young people, survey responses from over 1,300 young people, and data on key economic and social indicators for each region.

The Regional Insights Report sets out the priorities identified through these consultations and will ensure that funding is directed towards the initiatives that young people want and need to live their best lives.

A project must demonstrate that the anticipated benefits will directly contribute to addressing a regional priority area identified by young people in the Regional Insights.

Consultation is an important part of the process to ensure that projects are supported by the community and help make regional communities even better places for young people to live.

Applicants must provide evidence of consultation and support for their proposed projects, such as:

- co-design with young people benefiting from the project
- engagement through council's strategic planning
- quantitative or qualitative analysis of consultation including surveys, interviews and workshops
- letters of support, or other documents demonstrating community support for the projects

2. Feasibility

A project must:

- have a realistic budget based on quotes or detailed estimates, reasonable assumptions or previous experience with similar projects
- is cost-effective and represents value for money
- has estimated costs for contingencies that do not exceed a maximum of 10 per cent of the total project cost
- demonstrates access to the necessary expertise and support to deliver the project
- demonstrates sound risk management considering the risks and issues, including cultural sensitivities, and ways to address them.
- demonstrate support of partner agencies
- does not require ongoing funding from the NSW Government
- demonstrates how it will be operated and/or maintained when the project is completed (where applicable).
- be delivered within two years of both parties executing the Funding Deed

3. Impact

A project must:

- demonstrate qualitative or quantitative benefits of the project that will address identified regional priorities
- address a service delivery or policy gap of that region
- coordinate and work together with existing services to avoid duplication
- identify the outcomes intended from the project and include actions for evaluation, monitoring, and reporting

The program will be single stage application process. To facilitate assessment of the applications, applicants are required to submit the application documents via the program's online portal. Applications cannot be reopened or amended after the closing date except at the discretion of the Department of Regional NSW.

Applicants seeking an extension for extenuating circumstances should provide details with evidence where appropriate for the consideration of the Department of NSW.



How to apply



Visit [Smarty Grants](#) to submit an application under the program.

What needs to be included in an application?

All applications need to include:

- a clear project scope
- a project plan using required template
- a project budget using required template and based on quotes or detailed estimates, reasonable assumptions or previous experience with similar projects
- a risk assessment using required template
- a current copy of Public Liability Insurance for \$20 million in the name of the applicant (if available at time of lodgment of application)
- landowner consent if the land is not owned by the applicant
- evidence of project co-contribution (if applicable)
- evidence of community consultation and strong community support for the project
- evidence of project partnership (if applicable)
- information addressing each of the Assessment Criteria together with supporting documentation

Templates can be found at nsw.gov.au/regionalyouthinvestmentprogram



Assessment process



Following receipt of applications, the Departmental of Regional NSW staff will review projects against the program eligibility requirements and then facilitate the assessment of projects against the assessment criteria.

Through the assessment process, the Department of Regional NSW may request additional information from the applicant/s. Applications deemed eligible will first undergo merit-based assessment and then panel assessment. The Department of Regional NSW may also seek advice from other NSW Government agencies or other third-party providers (such as probity advisors) to assist with the assessment of projects. The Regional Youth Investment Assessment Panel will review project eligibility and assessment outcomes and form a list of projects that are deemed suitable/not suitable for government consideration.

The panel may recommend part-funding of projects where there is insufficient funding available for the whole project or where only a component of the project is considered suitable for funding. This may include part funding projects under the minimum grant threshold of \$150,000.

Broader factors that may be considered when assessing the overall package of projects suitable for funding include:

- amount of funding available
- suitability of projects for other government funding opportunities
- other factors deemed relevant and important in a local or whole of NSW context

The Department of Regional NSW can take other factors into account that may make an application ineligible for funding, such as any person, business or organisation that could cause reputational or other risk to the NSW Government.

The panel may at their discretion recommend a project conditionally on the basis that an external, professional project management service be engaged for the project to ensure appropriate affordability and deliverability of recommended projects. Where appropriate, projects may be referred to other funding programs in the NSW or Australian Government for consideration.

The panel's advice and recommendations will be provided to the appropriate persons/roles with the necessary authority and capacity for consideration. The assessment panel's advice will be endorsed by the Minister of Regional Youth.

Probity advice

Independent probity advisors will provide guidance to the Department of Regional NSW on any issues relating to integrity, fairness and accountability.

Can ineligible projects be referred to a more appropriate funding program?

Yes. Projects that are more suitable for other NSW Government programs may be referred to those programs. Applications that are referred will be subject to the full assessment criteria of the other NSW Government program to which they are referred and are not guaranteed to be successful under another program. Applicants may need to update their application to meet the criteria of the referred program.

Successful Applicants



Successful applicants will be notified by email and/or letter. Applicants may be requested to keep the proposed grant confidential for a period of time if an announcement is likely to be made by the NSW Government.

Unsuccessful Applicants

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email and/or letter. Feedback sessions will be available to unsuccessful applicants at the request of the applicant.

What happens if an eligible application is awarded a grant of funding?

Successful applicants will be required to enter a Funding Deed with the NSW Government.

Funding Deed

- Applicants will be required to provide all supporting documentation and approvals before the Department of Regional NSW can enter a Funding Deed. This includes \$20 million Public Liability Insurance, evidence of Co-contributions (if applicable), Landowner Consent (if the land is not owned by the applicant, Development Approval (if applicable) and approval from the Department of Education (DoE) Asset Management Unit for projects being undertaken on DoE land.
- The NSW Government makes no binding funding commitment to an applicant unless and until both parties sign a Funding Deed.
- Applicants must not make financial commitments for funded activities until Funding Deed has been executed by both parties.
- Grants will be paid via milestone payments set out in the Funding Deed. Timing and requirements will vary at NSW Government's discretion.

Measuring project outcomes and benefits

Organisations are required to evaluate their projects based on clear outcomes aligned with the investment theme/s. As part of the application process, organisations will need to identify project outcomes relating to the chosen investment theme and how they will be measured. Successful applicants will be asked to report on these measures in project progress reports and the final acquittal as required by the Office for Regional Youth. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation is the responsibility of the applicant and larger projects should consider this when resourcing and planning for the project.

Terms and Conditions

The following terms and conditions apply:

The Department of Regional NSW may choose to publicly announce funding for individual applications. It may also use information provided in the grant program to develop case studies.

All awarded grants will be GST exclusive. If you are registered for GST, this will be applied on top of the agreed grant value when payment is made. Community groups who are not registered for GST, should include GST costs within project budget estimates. GST will not be applied to Council grants.

Grants are assessable for income tax purposes, unless exempted by taxation law. It is recommended that applicants seek independent advice about taxation obligations or seek assistance from the Australian Taxation Office. The NSW Government does not provide advice on individual taxation circumstances.

The Department of Regional NSW reserves the right to undertake an audit of grant funding within seven years.

There is no promise of funding unless the condition of a Funding Deed being executed by both parties is met.

Confidentiality on the outcome of grant applications must be maintained until the NSW Government has made a public announcement.

Ethical Conduct

Applicants must not participate in any anti-competitive conduct.

It is a condition of the grant program application process that no gifts, benefits or hospitality are to be made to a Department of Regional NSW employee at any time. Any inducement in contravention of this condition may result in an applicant's proposal not being considered.

Conflicts of Interest

A conflict-of-interest declaration must be submitted with all proposals or in the application form. Where a conflict-of-interest detrimental to the assessment process is identified, mitigation measures must be put in place, or an individual may be asked not to participate in the application, assessment, or delivery stage of the process.

Confidentiality

Upon entering into an agreement, details about the agreement may be made publicly available (subject to information which the Department of Regional NSW deems to be commercial in confidence).

The applicant agrees not to disclose any confidential information pertaining to the grant program application or funding agreement/deed without prior written consent.

No legal relationship

No legal relationship exists or will arise between the Department of Regional NSW and any applicant in respect to the program or assessment process or the grants process.

No applicant submitting an application shall have any claim for compensation of any kind whatsoever as a result of participating in this program or the grants process and by submitting an application, each applicant shall be deemed to have agreed that it has no claim.

Applicant Costs for Submitting Application

The applicant's costs of preparing and applying and otherwise participating in the program are borne by the applicant.

Payment of grant funding

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Funding Deed which sets out the terms and conditions that apply to the provision of funding under the grant program in relation to the successful project.

Project commencement and completion

Successful applications must commence their projects within three months of both parties executing the Funding Deed and be completed within two years.

Disclosure of project information

Information submitted in applications may be shared with other NSW Government departments. For successful applications, the Department of Regional NSW may provide certain information about the application to the media and members of parliament for promotional purposes. This information will include project name and description, electorate, location, and amount of the grant. The contact details supplied by applicants may also be provided to the media and members of parliament. Any information provided by an applicant may be used for promotional material prepared by the Department of Regional NSW or NSW Government. The Department of Regional NSW or NSW Government may publicly announce funding for individual applications and may also use information provided in applications to develop case studies.

All recipients of NSW Government funding should acknowledge this financial support as per the Funding Acknowledgement Guidelines for Recipients of NSW Government Grants available at nsw.gov.au/branding/sponsorship-and-funding-acknowledgment-guidelines

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)

Information in applications and all related correspondence, attachments and other documents may be made publicly available under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) (GIPA Act). Information may be withheld from public disclosure where the provisions of the GIPA Act enable this. The GIPA Act sets out provisions for making government information accessible to the public by:

- requiring government agencies to make certain sorts of information freely available;
- encouraging government agencies to release as much other information as possible;
- giving the public an enforceable right to make access applications for government information; and
- restricting access to information only when there is an overriding public interest against disclosure

No guarantee of funding

Submission of an application does not guarantee an award of grant funding.

These guidelines are subject to change at any time at the sole discretion of the Department of Regional NSW.

The Department of Regional NSW's rights

The Department of Regional NSW has, in addition to any other rights or discretions, the right, in its absolute discretion, and at any stage of the program and without giving reasons to:

- extend the closing date and time at any time before the closing date;
- issue addendum to the Guidelines and any addenda issued will become part of the Guidelines and must be addressed by applicants;
- change, vary or amend the Guidelines including the indicative timing described in the Guidelines;
- suspend, amend, vary or discontinue the program;
- have regard to the Department of Regional NSW's (or other government agency's) knowledge and previous experience and dealings with any applicant and information about the past or current performance of an applicant under any contract, arrangement or funding agreement with the Department of Regional NSW or other government entity;

and the Department of Regional NSW's decision in such matters will be final, and the Department of Regional NSW will not be liable to an applicant because the Department of Regional NSW has exercised any or none of its rights in these Additional Terms and Conditions.

Available support

For help preparing applications, information and resources including relevant application templates are available online.

A webinar will be held during the application open period.

Complaints

Any concerns about the program or individual applications should be submitted in writing to regional.youth@regional.nsw.gov.au. If you do not agree with the way the Department of Regional NSW handled the issue, you may wish to contact the NSW Ombudsman via ombo.nsw.gov.au.

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