

Disability Advocacy Futures Program 2023/24 Special Purposes and Projects; and Sector Development Grant Program Guidelines

July 2023

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Grant Program Guidelines: Disability Advocacy Futures Program 2023/24 Special Purposes and Projects; and Sector Development

The Disability Advocacy Futures Program (DAFP) 2023/24 Special Purposes and Projects; and Sector Development Grant Program Guidelines contain information to assist potential applicants to complete the application. It includes an overview of the DAFP 2023/24 Special Purposes and Projects; and Sector Development grant program, information about the application process, eligibility and assessment criteria, how the funds can and cannot be used, and the performance, monitoring and reporting requirements.

It is recommended that these guidelines are read prior to completing your application for the DAFP 2023/24 Special Purposes and Projects; and Sector Development grant program.

Overview of the DAFP 2023/24 Special Purposes and Projects; and Sector Development grant

In NSW, approximately 17% of the population lives with disability¹. Of those approximately 1.35 million people, 11%, are eligible for services and supports under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). In December 2019, the NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner² recommended the establishment of the DAFP which commenced on 1 January 2022 and is funded until October 2024.

The DAFP focuses on all people with disability in NSW who need support to access NSW Government funded or provided services, whether or not they are NDIS participants. Where relevant, it also targets specific communities and disability types.

The DAFP currently funds 19 organisations to deliver advocacy services:

- Individual advocacy delivered by seven (7) providers (50% of DAFP funding)
- Systemic advocacy delivered by six (6) providers (25% of DAFP funding) and
- Representative advocacy delivered by nine (9) providers (15% of DAFP funding).

The remaining 10% of the DAFP funding is to be allocated to:

- Special Purposes and Projects (5% of DAFP funding)
- Sector Development functions (5% of DAFP funding).

¹ SDAC 2018 <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/2018>

² Review into Disability Advocacy in NSW <https://www.ageingdisabilitycommission.nsw.gov.au/reports-and-submissions/review-into-disability-advocacy-in-nsw.html>

Purpose of the DAFP 2023/24 Special Purposes and Projects; and Sector Development grant program

Under the DAFP, the 2023/24 Special Purposes and Projects; and Sector Development grant programs aims to:

- support initiatives to assist people with disability in NSW to actively engage in their communities in a more informed and empowered way, for which alternative funding sources are not available, and
- drive quality improvement, collaboration and innovation among advocacy organisations, and to build stronger networks and learning opportunities.

Objectives

The DAFP 2023/24 Special Purposes and Projects; and Sector Development grant programs has 3 key objectives:

1. Increase available supports to assist people with disability in NSW to actively engage in their communities in a more informed and empowered way.
2. Further develop the NSW disability advocacy sector through quality improvement, collaboration and innovation.
3. Build stronger networks and learning opportunities for the NSW disability advocacy sector.

Grant applications must demonstrate how the proposed project will contribute to the development of the NSW disability advocacy sector and how the project will assist people with disability to actively engage in their communities by meeting **at least one** of the program objectives.

Target group

DAFP 2023/24 Special Purposes and Projects; and Sector Development focuses on all people with disability in NSW who need support to access NSW Government funded or provided services, whether or not they are NDIS participants. Where relevant, it also targets specific communities and disability types.

Eligibility criteria

All applicants are required to meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Non-government, non-profit organisations with capacity to contract for services as outlined in the DAFP Grant Program Guidelines.

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 these guidelines),
- all applicants **must** adhere to NSW Government public health orders and advice in regard to COVID-19. Up-to-date information is available on the [NSW Government COVID-19 website](#). And
- applications **will not** be accepted from organisations that have outstanding acquittals with DCJ.

Assessment criteria

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

- demonstrated ability to meet the grant objectives and outcomes
- demonstrated capacity to deliver projects/activities for the target groups
- demonstrated value for money
- experience working with the target groups
- community links and engagement with relevant stakeholders (including government and non-government organisations) to deliver the proposed activities.

Prioritisation

DAFP Special Purposes and Projects; and Sector Development grants is to support community-operated initiatives to assist people with disability to actively engage in their communities in a more informed and empowered way.

DAFP Special Purposes and Projects; and Sector Development can be specifically targeted to meet government priorities, identified special needs, or address issues not covered in alternative funding streams under the DAFP.

Assessment:

Applications will be assessed against eligibility, prioritisation and assessment criteria.

Applications will initially be reviewed by the DCJ team for general eligibility and compliance with guidelines. Officers may contact applicants to seek clarification or further supporting information. The DCJ team will also undertake a preliminary assessment against the assessment criteria.

Applications will then proceed to the Assessment Panel for assessment. The Assessment Panel may include representatives of NSW Government and independent experts.

The assessment panel will assess applications based on the criteria and weightings provided in these guidelines. Ranking based on assessment scoring will generally form the basis of the recommendations made by the assessment panel unless there is a particular circumstance that requires consideration such as ensuring geographic spread of funding and duplication of projects.

Applicants will be formally notified whether their application has been successful.

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 or Grant with DCJ.

Funding amounts

Eligible applicants can apply for a one-off grant funding from \$20,000 (minimum) up to \$100,000 (maximum).

A total funding pool of up to \$1,000,000 is available.

More than one application can be submitted for consideration by an applicant. However, not all applications will be successful as each application will be considered individually through a competitive merit based assessment. In the application form, applicants will be asked to prioritise their applications if more than one application is submitted. The same project cannot be submitted twice by different applicants.

Funding received through this one-off grant must be expended by 4 October 2024.

DCJ may vary the distribution of packages depending on the number of funding applications submitted. DCJ may also offer successful applicants a package lower than the amount requested.

Grant funds expenditure

All funded projects must expend the grant funds by 4 October 2024.

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.

Grant funds 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 include, for example:

- 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, for example tables and computers
- 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.

Application process

One step application process:

One application form submitted by the applicant that will be assessed based on eligibility and assessment criteria. This process will be through the Smarty Grants portal.

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 SmartyGrants portal.

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.

Subcontracting information

Organisations can work together as a joint application, with subcontractors or project partners. However, there must be a lead organisation who is the primary applicant. If this is the case for your project, there should be clear subcontracting or partnering arrangements with an agreement in place between the parties. DCJ will only enter into an agreement with the lead organisation, and the funds will be provided to the lead organisation (primary applicant).

For further information refer to the relevant information on the DCJ website on [subcontracting](#).

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.

COVID-19

Projects must adhere to NSW Government public health orders and advice in regard to COVID-19. Up-to-date information is available on the [NSW Government COVID-19 website](#).

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 but is not limited to a minimum of \$10 million Public Liability Insurance.

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

You must provide evidence of the above insurance for an amount recommended by a professional insurance adviser, or any such other insurance policies as may reasonably be required by DCJ, and as required by law, for you and any of your employees or sub-contractors, in relation to the performance of the services.

If your organisation is not covered by the appropriate insurance, you will need to approach another organisation (such as your local council or an incorporated not-for-profit) to sponsor your application so that your project will be covered under their insurance.

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.

Successful applicants - funding agreement.

The application, Grant Funding Agreement and acquittal for the grant will be managed using the SmartyGrants management system and DocuSign.

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 DocuSign, 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 the DAFP team by email on DAFP@facns.gov.au.

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 the DAFP team by email on DAFP@facns.gov.au.
- Projects must not start before 9 October 2023 and must be completed within a 12 month period. You are required to submit a Final Report and Financial Acquittal in SmartyGrants no later than 8 November 2024. DCJ will send you the final acquittal form prior to 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.

Timeframes

The following table contains indicative dates and activities for the grant program.

Date	Event/Action
24 July 2023	Grant applications open
28 August 2023	Grant applications close
September 2023	Assessment of grant applications
September 2023	Advice to all applicants
October 2023	Public announcement by Minister
October 2023	Grant Funding Agreements sent to successful applicants and payment is made
October 2023	Grant program results published
9 October 2023	Projects commence
4 October 2024	Projects end
4 November 2024	Final Report and Financial Acquittal due to DCJ

Prepare to submit your application:

You are able to preview a copy of the application form on the SmartyGrants platform before you

start to complete it online, this will help you to prepare the content of your application. To access the application you will need to follow the link on the grant program's webpage.

Ensure you read the application form carefully, it contains important instructions that relate to the completion of the form and support the assessment process.

If you already have a SmartyGrants account or registration, you can use your existing log in details. If your organisation does not have an account you can register by following the links on the grant program's webpage.

Do not leave your application to the last minute, the deadline for applications is a strict deadline.

At the end of the online application form, you will be prompted to review your application. Ensure that you have answered the questions, any errors will be highlighted in red and you will be prompted to go back and correct the error before your application can be submitted.

Once you have reviewed your application and you are ready to submit it, you will need to click the submit button. Once submitted no changes can be made. Simply saving your application does not lodge your application with the Department.

Ensure you read these Program Guidelines carefully. If you have questions, you can contact the DAFP team by email on DAFP@fac.s.nsw.gov.au

If you become aware of an error once your application has been submitted, please contact the DAFP team before the closing date via DAFP@fac.s.nsw.gov.au

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

Please note that all funding decisions are final, and you may not appeal the decision in relation to your application. Please ensure all details in your application are correct at the time of submission.

Department of Communities and Justice

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Office hours:

Monday to Friday
9.00am — 5.00pm

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