

Round Two 2022

# Regional Events Acceleration Fund

Program Guidelines







Images supplied by Destination NSW.  
Cover image: Grafton Jacaranda Festival 2016

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## Message from the Deputy Premier

Regional NSW has a long history of hosting events that bring communities together and showcase the amazing assets we have to offer. From the Tamworth Country Music Festival to the Bowral Classic cycling event, there is no shortage of world-class events being staged across our regions.

That's why we are so excited to announce Round 2 of the Regional Events Acceleration Fund, providing up to \$20 million to attract new events and support existing events to grow even bigger and better. The funding is also aimed at improving accessibility so everyone in our community can enjoy these special events.

The Regional Events Acceleration Fund Round 1 has already seen tremendous results, supporting events including the World Surf League Tweed Coast Pro and Super W Rugby in Coffs Harbour. The NSW Government is keen to build on this success and it's more important than ever to continue investing in our local communities. Supporting iconic major events will stimulate regional economies and support economic recovery after cumulative lockdowns and natural disasters.

I encourage event organisers to take up the funding opportunity offered by Round 2 of the Regional Events Acceleration Fund. It's a chance to show your local community and visitors from far and wide that our regions are home to unique and exciting celebrations. Whether it's a world-class sporting match, major food festival or music concert, we want to see it happen in Regional NSW.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Toole".

**The Hon. Paul Toole, MP**

Deputy Premier  
Minister for Regional New South Wales  
Minister for Police

## Fund overview

Major events bring tens of thousands of metropolitan, interstate and international visitors to regional NSW each year. Visitors not only spend money at these events, but at local cafes and restaurants, service stations, bars, tourist attractions and accommodation.

Major events help boost local economies, create jobs and ensure local communities have access to world-class entertainment at their doorstep. Hosting a major event can also position a regional area as an attractive destination to visit again, bringing visitors back to further explore the region.

Round 2 of the Regional Events Acceleration Fund will provide up to \$20 million in grants to attract new events to the regions, make existing iconic regional NSW events even bigger and better, and to improve accessibility and inclusion at major events. Supporting iconic major events will stimulate regional economies and support recovery from the effects of ongoing drought, bushfires, floods and COVID-19.





## Program objectives

The key objectives of the Regional Events Acceleration Fund are to:

- boost the economic and social recovery of regional NSW by attracting new major events to regional areas and supporting existing iconic major events to be bigger and better
- enhance the visitor experience by improving accessibility and inclusion at major events.

## Key dates

Funding to support events delivered between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023

**Applications open:**  
**Friday 18 March 2022**

**Applications close:**  
**5pm Tuesday 4 October 2022**

**Assessment and approval process:**  
**Approximately ten weeks from submission**



# Funding streams

Round 2 of the Regional Events Acceleration Fund will be available through three funding streams.

 Warbirds, Downunder Show 2018, Temora



## Stream One

### MAJOR EVENT ENHANCEMENT

Funding between \$50,000 and \$200,000 to support existing iconic regional events by funding the operational improvements and infrastructure needed to boost attendance and improve visitor experience. Event infrastructure is defined as temporary or hired equipment to improve the visitor experience. Permanent event infrastructure projects are not supported through this stream.

Applicants must demonstrate how their proposed funded activity is additional to what has been delivered previously for the event, and how it will attract additional visitors, improve visitor experience and increase length of stay for visitors.

### Co-contribution

Stream One applicants are eligible to apply for up to 25 per cent of their total event cost.

Examples of eligible projects for Stream One funding include:

- the introduction of additional seating areas
- the installation of temporary event fencing
- securing a major artist/performance to increase the event's appeal
- additional staging for a music festival
- establishing a pop-up camping and caravan site to support more overnight stays, in conjunction with other improvements aimed at attracting additional visitation
- improving temporary parking areas on or near an event.

## Stream Two

### MAJOR EVENT ATTRACTION

Funding from \$100,000 to support the attraction and delivery of new major international and domestic events, with a focus on events that will become iconic to regional NSW and provide national or international exposure. Funding may also be sought to retain a major event in NSW that is genuinely "footloose".

Funding applications for Stream Two can be made for a minimum of \$100,000 with no cap on the maximum grant application amount. Applications will be assessed in terms of value-for-money and the event's ability to deliver strong economic benefit to regional NSW.

Applicants seeking to attract new major events to regional NSW are advised to consider holding the event in off-peak tourism periods to ensure there is sufficient accommodation and visitor services available, and to avoid clashes with existing major events. Events that are strategically scheduled to boost visitation during off-peak tourism periods are preferred.

Applicants seeking funding to retain a major event in regional NSW must provide strong evidence to demonstrate the event is genuinely "footloose" and at risk of relocating interstate, internationally or to metro NSW. Existing events that are not "footloose" should consider whether they are eligible to apply for Stream One.

### Co-contribution

Stream Two applications must have a minimum financial co-contribution of 25 per cent of the total grant amount.

Examples of eligible Stream Two projects include:

- an international artist performing a concert in regional NSW
- a high-profile major sporting fixture such as netball, rugby union, cricket or rugby league
- creating a new major event
- the attraction and relocation of a major event or major sporting fixture from interstate to regional NSW.

Stream Two can support temporary event infrastructure as part of the funded project. Event infrastructure is defined as temporary or hired equipment to improve visitor experience. Permanent event infrastructure projects are not supported through this stream.



## Stream Three

### MAJOR EVENT ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

Stream Three supports improvements to infrastructure that will ensure major events are accessible and inclusive to people with disability.

Funding between \$15,000 and \$100,000 to support temporary and/or permanent event infrastructure that will improve accessibility and inclusion at major iconic events in regional NSW.

Inclusive tourism enables people with disability and accessibility requirements to participate independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universally designed events, services and environments.

Projects that involve the purchase of permanent or portable infrastructure that will improve accessibility and inclusion at events hosted in regional NSW in the future can be supported through Stream Three.

Purchased event infrastructure must be in place for the event for which the applicant has applied for funding and must remain in regional NSW for the life of the asset.

Applicants are encouraged to partner with their local council to develop a joint proposal regarding the funded activities under Stream Three to ensure the benefits can be ongoing and dispersed amongst the local community. Applications that are aligned to the relevant local council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan are preferred.

### Co-contribution

Stream Three applications must have a minimum financial co-contribution of 25 per cent of the total grant amount.

Examples of eligible Stream Three projects include:

- improvements to the event's accessibility infrastructure, such as hard flooring for wheelchair access
- installation of accessible bathrooms or changing places amenities at the event location
- creation of additional accessible parking and/or camping areas
- offering quiet spaces and/or providing sensory focused performances to cater for neurodiverse audiences
- purchase of portable event infrastructure that can be used at the event and at other events in the local area to improve accessibility.

Applicants must apply for either Stream One or Two to be eligible for Stream Three and cannot apply to Stream Three only. Applications that select Stream One or Two and also Stream Three are assessed as a combined application.

### Grant Amounts

	Minimum	Maximum
<b>Stream One</b> Major Event Enhancement	\$50,000	\$200,000
<b>Stream Two</b> Major Event Attraction	\$100,000	No Maximum
<b>Stream Three</b> Major Event Accessibility and Inclusion	\$15,000	\$100,000



📍 Snowtunes 2019, Jindabyne

## Co-contribution requirements

- Stream One up to 25 per cent of the total event cost.
- Stream Two at least 25 per cent of the total grant amount.
- Stream Three at least 25 per cent of the total grant amount.
- Co contributions must be cash and cannot be made in-kind. Cash that is forecast to be gained as revenue through ticket sales or other revenue streams as a result of the event delivery such as merchandise sales cannot be used as a co contribution. Evidence of the co contribution must be provided. Co contributions cannot be made using funding received from the NSW Government.
- Projects that maximise investment from the applicant, Commonwealth Government and/or other industry contributions will be preferred.
- Events that have already secured or are seeking funding from another NSW Government program are eligible to apply and will need to demonstrate how the activities funded by the Regional Events Acceleration Fund are different and complementary to the other NSW Government funded activities.



# Eligibility criteria

## Eligible applicants

To be eligible for funding under the Regional Events Acceleration Fund applicants must be the event owner (i.e. the applicant either owns or has secured the rights to host the event) and be one of the following entities:

- the event organiser or committee
- a local council or Joint Organisation of Councils
- a not-for-profit organisation, including business chambers, industry associations and charities
- a sporting body (i.e. NSW or National Associations)
- a Local Aboriginal Land Council.

## Applicants must:

- ✓ be financially solvent, have an Australian Business Number (ABN) and be a sole trader; company; incorporated association; or trust entity
- ✓ have appropriate insurance cover including at least \$20 million public liability insurance for the event period
- ✓ have the consent of the landowner and development approval (if required)
- ✓ have provided a completed datasheet; an event management plan that includes an accessibility and inclusion plan; and evidence of co-contribution.

For profit entities and events that exist to make a profit are eligible to apply and must demonstrate the event will deliver a clear public benefit.

## Eligible locations

- ✓ Only events hosted in one or more of the 93 regional NSW Local Government Areas (LGAs), the Unincorporated Far West Region, and Lord Howe Island are eligible for funding through the Regional Events Acceleration Fund. Events hosted in the Greater Sydney metropolitan area, and the Newcastle and Wollongong LGAs are not eligible for funding.
- ✓ A full list of the 93 eligible LGAs can be found in the Frequently Asked Questions section of the webpage.

## Eligible event types

The types of events eligible for funding include:

- major sporting and lifestyle events
- major food and beverage events
- major music, art, cultural and regionally significant agricultural field day events.

## Applicants must demonstrate the event:

- will take place in one of the 93 regional NSW LGAs, Unincorporated Far West Region or Lord Howe Island
- will occur between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023
- has a central location/venue and does not consist of a series of multiple events in a variety of locations.

## Applicants must demonstrate the project type is aligned to the following:

- *Stream One*: operational improvements and/or temporary infrastructure needed to boost major event attendance and improve visitor experience at an existing event
- *Stream Two*: attracting and delivering a major new international or domestic event or retaining a major event in regional NSW that is “footloose”
- *Stream Three*: the purchase or hire of accessibility infrastructure and inclusive programming in conjunction with a Stream One or Stream Two application.

- ✓ Events held on the border of NSW and other states or territories are eligible to apply, however applicants must show at least 80 per cent of the event’s activity will be physically located in regional NSW or at least 50 per cent of its economic benefit will flow to regional NSW.
- ✓ Events hosted in locations that leverage tourism and sporting infrastructure previously supported by the NSW Government are preferable and are encouraged to apply.

## Ineligible event types

### The list below is a guide to indicate the types of events not supported:

- ✗ community events such as markets, bazaars, regular sporting meets (i.e. home/away games, local tournaments), club gatherings (RSL, Rotary, Chambers of Commerce etc.), classes and workshops
- ✗ agricultural/country shows and agricultural field day events that are not regionally significant. Agricultural/country shows may be eligible for funding through the Country Shows Support Package
- ✗ charity fundraising events
- ✗ regional racing carnivals (i.e. horse or greyhound racing) and events occurring as part of a regular schedule of racing
- ✗ regular theatre programs
- ✗ business events and conferences
- ✗ events with religious ceremony or celebration as the principal focus (i.e. Easter or Christmas celebrations)
- ✗ community public holiday celebrations (such as Australia Day, Anzac Day, or New Year’s Eve celebrations)
- ✗ Australian or state/territory government owned and/or operated events
- ✗ Regular touring events (e.g. regional theatre programs, touring festivals and other events scheduled on a regular or recurring basis) are ineligible to apply, however individual major events which are part of a unique or one-off tour or series are eligible to apply. A separate application must be submitted for each event that is requesting funding. Each event must meet the program’s eligibility and assessment criteria to be considered for funding. Multiple events submitted as part of a tour within one application are ineligible.

## Ineligible project costs

### The list below is a guide to indicate the types of expenses not supported:

- ✗ support for business as usual activities or general administrative costs
- ✗ marketing, advertising, or event promotions that would occur prior to the event being held. This does not include event signage
- ✗ financing costs, including interest and debt financing
- ✗ capital expenditure for the purchase of assets for everyday activities, such as office furniture and equipment, motor vehicles, computers, printers or photocopiers
- ✗ purchasing and constructing fixed infrastructure, with the exception of activities funded through Stream Three for the purpose of improving accessibility and inclusivity
- ✗ costs involved in the purchase or upgrade/hire of software (including user licences) and ICT hardware (unless it directly relates to the event)
- ✗ costs such as rent and utilities
- ✗ staff training and development costs
- ✗ insurance costs (applicants must hold and maintain adequate insurance coverage for any liability arising as a result of their participation in funded activities)
- ✗ costs related to obtaining human resources used on the project, including job advertising and recruiting, and contract negotiations
- ✗ depreciation of plant and equipment beyond the life of the project
- ✗ opportunity costs relating to allocating resources to the agreed grant project.



# Assessment criteria

Eligible applications will be assessed against four program criteria:

## One - Economic Impact

Applicants must demonstrate how the event provides economic benefit to regional NSW by demonstrating that the event:

- is regionally significant, as defined by evidence (i.e., through previous event ticket sales) or letters of support confirming the event is able to attract over 5,000 people. Events that will attract fewer than 5,000 people can demonstrate they are regionally significant by providing strong evidence of economic benefit through visitation and by providing letters of support. Applicants must be able to demonstrate how they calculated their estimated visitation figures
- provides an economic benefit to regional NSW through increased visitation, employment and by engaging local suppliers
- is able to stimulate the local economy by attracting more than 30 per cent attendance from visitors, with a visitor defined as being someone who lives 50km or more from where the event is being held
- has the ability to generate interstate, national and/or international exposure and provide marketing benefits for regional NSW, as evidenced through a marketing plan.

Applicants are required to submit a completed data sheet as part of the economic impact criteria. The data sheet will generate a benefit-to-cost ratio for the application, however it is not a requirement of the funding that the application generates a benefit-to-cost ratio greater than 1.0.

## Two - Strategic Alignment

Applicants need to demonstrate the project meets the objective of the fund to boost the economic and social recovery of regional NSW by attracting new major events to regional areas and supporting existing iconic regional events to grow.

Applicants must demonstrate:

- how the event will leave a positive legacy within regional NSW and provide benefit to the host community beyond the actual event itself
- how the event is aligned with the Destination Management Plans relevant to the region, the NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030, and other regional strategies and policies
- the event has the support of the Destination Network and the local tourism industry. This can be demonstrated through letters of support
- has support from the local council, community groups and/or other relevant stakeholders. This can be demonstrated through letters of support.

Applicants should consider scheduling the event in an off-peak or shoulder period and consider the accommodation capacity of the host location, including if the scheduling will clash with another major event hosted in the same region.

## Three - Accessibility and Sustainability

Applicants must demonstrate:

- the event has an accessibility and inclusion plan outlining how the event will be accessible and inclusive for people with disability
- they have a strong commitment to going above and beyond the basic requirements to improve the visitor experience for people with disability
- there is a long-term vision for the event that will benefit regional NSW over multiple years, including a commitment to host the event in regional NSW in future
- the event and/or project is sustainable and can be delivered again in future without the need for further government funding.

Applications to Stream Three must demonstrate:

- the project incorporates universal design principles and is aligned to the relevant local council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- the project can accommodate a wide range of requirements that will improve the visitor experience for people with physical, sensory and cognitive disability.

Stream Three applications that propose to purchase event infrastructure must demonstrate that purchasing the equipment is more economical than hiring, and there will be ongoing benefits as a result of the infrastructure at future events in regional NSW.

## Four - Deliverability and Affordability

Applicants must demonstrate the project is deliverable and financially viable by providing:

- a well-developed event management plan with clear strategies for measuring and evaluating visitation and the visitor experience
- a risk management plan for the event that clearly outlines the strategies and processes used to mitigate risks
- evidence of a well-structured and organised event management committee or external events company in place to manage the delivery of the event
- a detailed event budget including competitive quotes for services and equipment relevant to the funding.

Applicants must provide evidence of the required cash co-contributions and are encouraged to maximise the financial co-contributions towards their project.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to ensure any prize money for competitors is equitable for male and female competitors.



## Assessment process

The Regional Events Acceleration Fund Assessment Panel will review applications on an ongoing basis until 4 October 2022 or until the funding is fully committed. The assessment process will take approximately ten weeks from the time an application is received, and event owners will be notified as soon as is practical following the assessment outcome.

During the assessment process the Department of Regional NSW may request additional information from the applicant. Advice may also be sought from other NSW Government agencies or other third parties (such as probity advisors) to assist with the assessment of projects.

The Assessment Panel may also recommend part-funding of events where there is insufficient funding available for the whole event, where only a component of the project is considered suitable for funding or a lesser funding amount to what is requested is deemed more appropriate.

Funding recommendations made by the Assessment Panel will be considered and approved by the Department of Regional NSW.

Other factors may be taken into consideration when determining final projects to receive funding, including geographical distribution of events across the eligible LGAs in regional NSW, total amount of funding available, the importance of the event to the local economy, suitability of events for other government funding opportunities, and alignment with existing NSW Government policies and strategies.

The Assessment Panel can recommend projects are approved for funding without the requirement for a co-contribution at its sole discretion.

The Department of Regional NSW, at its sole discretion, can take other factors into account that may make an application ineligible for funding, including issues that could cause reputational or other risk to the NSW Government.



## How to apply

Visit <https://rgf.smartygrants.com.au/REAF2> to make an application to Round Two of the Regional Events Acceleration Fund.





## AVAILABLE SUPPORT

Frequently Asked Questions and other resources to assist with funding applications are available at [www.nsw.gov.au/REAFund](http://www.nsw.gov.au/REAFund)

Staff from the Department of Regional NSW are also available to provide information and support for Regional Event Acceleration Fund applicants.

Please contact [tourism.programs@regional.nsw.gov.au](mailto:tourism.programs@regional.nsw.gov.au) or call 1300 679 673.

Research and documents including information on how to obtain Destination Management Plans for regional NSW can be found on the Destination NSW website.

Applicants are encouraged to meet with their local council, DRNSW regional-based teams, and Destination Network prior to submitting an application.

## SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

Successful applicants will be required to enter into and comply with a Funding Agreement with the NSW Government. The Funding Agreement details a range of deliverables required by the NSW Government.

These include, but are not limited to, a requirement for the event owner to:

- include the NSW Government logo on all marketing collateral and advertising associated with the event
- give the NSW Government the right to approve all marketing and advertising material containing its logo at the artwork stage (i.e. prior to printing, broadcast or publication)
- create, update and maintain an event listing on [visitnsw.com](http://visitnsw.com)
- consult regularly with the local council, Destination NSW and the relevant Destination Network to maximise marketing and event development efforts
- offer the NSW Government signage opportunities at the event
- submit a detailed post event report and financial statement outlining how the initiatives funded were delivered and highlighting key measures of success, such as the number of overnight visitors generated by the event. This report must be submitted within two (2) months of the event's completion.

The NSW Government makes no binding funding commitment to an applicant unless and until both parties sign a Funding Agreement.

The Funding Agreement will require the successful applicant to provide a copy of all relevant insurances and other supporting documentation relevant to the project or as requested by the Department of Regional NSW.

Grants will be paid via milestone payments set out in the Funding Agreement. Timing and requirements will vary depending on the scope and timelines of the project.

Successful applicants will be required to submit project progress reports to the NSW Government as outlined in the Funding Agreement. Examples of measures to be included in the report are completion of project activities and number of full time equivalent employees hired as a result of the project.

Applicants may be requested to keep the grant confidential for a period of time if an announcement is likely to be made by the NSW Government.

## UNSUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of each application and unsuccessful applicants will be offered a feedback session.





## ✦ IMPORTANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Applicants should note:

- the NSW Government may choose to publicly announce funding for individual applications and the expected jobs created by the funding. It may also use information provided in the grant to develop case studies
- requests for variations or changes to the project will only be considered in limited circumstances
- successful applicants will be required to pay back unspent funds, or any funds not spent in accordance with the funding deed
- successful applicants will be required to participate in a program evaluation after the project has commenced. The evaluation will require applicants to provide evidence of how projects have resulted in measurable benefits consistent with the fund's objectives, focusing on employment and benefits to regional economies and communities
- all recipients of NSW Government funding must acknowledge this financial support as per the Funding Acknowledgement Guidelines for Recipients of NSW Government Grants available at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/branding/sponsorship-and-funding-acknowledgment-guidelines/funding-acknowledgement-guidelines>
- payments will be GST exclusive. Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. It is recommended applicants seek independent professional 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.

## ! COMPLAINTS

Any concerns about the program or individual applications should be submitted in writing to [regionalnsw.business@regional.nsw.gov.au](mailto:regionalnsw.business@regional.nsw.gov.au). If applicants do not agree with the way the Department of Regional NSW handled the issue, they may wish to contact the NSW Ombudsman via [ombo.nsw.gov.au](http://ombo.nsw.gov.au)

## GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) ACT

Applicants should be aware information submitted in applications and all related correspondence, attachments and other documents may be made publicly available under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW). Information that is deemed to be commercially sensitive will be withheld.

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- 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
- restricting access to information only when there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.



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# Contact

For more information, please contact  
[tourism.programs@regional.nsw.gov.au](mailto:tourism.programs@regional.nsw.gov.au)

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