**Checklist for Grant Opportunity Guidelines**

Officials **must** develop and publish grant opportunity guidelines for all grant opportunities and for revised guidelines where significant changes have been made to a grant opportunity (CGRPs paragraph 4.4). CGRPs paragraph 13.3 sets out elements that should be included in grant opportunity guidelines. Officials should ensure that the requirements of grant opportunities are simply expressed, are clear in their intent and are effectively communicated to stakeholders.

The checklist below is for all grant opportunities and should be used in conjunction with the [grant opportunity guidelines template](https://www.finance.gov.au/grants-toolkit) selected for your grant opportunity. If you have any questions, please direct them to GrantGuidelines@finance.gov.au.

[**National Agreement on Closing the Gap**](https://www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement)

All Australian Government agencies are committed to implementing the [National Agreement on Closing the Gap](https://www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement). The National Agreement is a commitment from all parties to set out a future where policy making that impacts the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is done in full and genuine partnership. All agencies are accountable for delivering the National Agreement and should consider embedding the Closing the Gap Priority Reforms in their ways of working.

Where a grant opportunity provides a proportion of funding to be quarantined or prioritised, is contributing to one or more of the Closing the Gap targets or is contributing to the Closing the Gap priority reforms, this should be outlined in the grant opportunity guidelines.

The National Indigenous Australians Agency has a [Closing the Gap Prioritisation Guide](https://www.niaa.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2024-04/niaa-ctg-grants-prioritisation-guide-1.pdf) to help entities. This guide provides entities practical prioritisation methods to embed practices to achieve the Closing the Gap Priority Reforms.

**Checklist**

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| **Heading/Section** | **Information that guidelines should contain and CGRPs references for more details** | **üû** |
| **Title page of grant** **opportunity**  | **CGRPs references: 13.9, 13.3, 11.5** |
| Title Page | List:* the program name
* Grant Opportunity name
* opening and closing dates
* policy and administering entities
* enquiry information
* the type of grant process
 |  |
| Contents Page | Is this included and updated? |  |
| Process diagram | Does the flowchart clearly set out the processes the opportunity will follow? |  |
| Introduction | Standard text explanation.  |  |
| **About the grant program** | **CGRPs references: 2.1, 2.3, 10.1, 10.2** |
| About the [*name of*] grant opportunity | Are the purpose, objectives, outcomes, total cost and timeframe clearly set out? Objectives should be concise, unambiguous and measurable. They should clearly link to the policy outcomes. |  |
| National Agreement on Closing the Gap | If the grant opportunity will contribute to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap outline how this grant opportunity will:* contribute to one or more of the Closing the Gap targets
* contribute to the Closing the Gap priority reforms, including prioritising funding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, particularly Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.
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| **Grant amount and grant period** | **CGRPs reference: 7.5, 8.5, 10.6** |
| Grants available | Do the guidelines outline the total funding available for this grant opportunity?Is it clear whether there is a minimum or maximum amount available per grant?Where the grant funding is apportioned to particular categories, geographic regions, etc. is this clearly stated?If the grantee is required to contribute towards the grant amount is this clearly stated? |  |
| National Agreement on Closing the Gap | Where a proportion of the grant funding is to be quarantined or prioritised, for example, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations, indicate what proportion will be prioritised/quarantined. |  |
| Indexation | If indexation has been included in the grant funding decision, this indexation must be passed on to grantees. If indexation is included is this noted in the guidelines as well as when it will be paid? |  |
| Grant period (longer term agreements and notice periods). | Has the timeframe for the grant been included? Have you considered whether longer term grant agreements are appropriate? Officials should consider whether longer term grant agreements are appropriate. Longer term grant agreements may be appropriate where there is a likelihood that ongoing service delivery will be required, where activities are likely to occur over a number of years, or where there is a pattern of variations to extend the duration of a grant.**Note:** include notice period details in the grant agreement.Officials should consider longer notice periods for renewal or cessation of grants and provide details on the notice period for the grant, if applicable. Longer notification periods can assist grantees to manage the impact of renewal/extension or cessation of grants.Providing longer notice periods and longer grant agreements will reflect the [Government’s commitment to better support the Community Sector Organisations (CSOs).](https://ministers.finance.gov.au/financeminister/media-release/2024/04/24/labour-continues-deliver-its-commitment-community-sector-organisations) |  |
| **Eligibility criteria** | **CGRPs references: 10.3, 11.3, 13.2-13.9** |
| Who is eligible to apply for a grant? | Are the criteria clear and objective? Is it clear whether the criteria ‘must all be met’ or ‘may be waived,’ and when that might occur? If the selection process is a closed opportunity or targeted with limited eligible applicants, are the guidelines clear about this and the reasons why this selection process was appropriate. |  |
| Who is not eligible to apply for a grant? | If relevant, does this section provide clear information?***Note: National Redress Scheme*** *for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Grant Connected Policy* makes non-government institutions named in applications to the Scheme, or in the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, that do not join the Scheme ineligible for future Australian Government grant funding. The Department of Social Services is the entity responsible for providing advice on this policy. [www.nationalredress.gov.au](http://www.nationalredress.gov.au). |  |
| What qualifications, skills or checks are required? | If relevant, does this section provide clear information on the required skills and qualifications? |  |
| Waiving eligibility criteria | If officials need to waive eligibility criteria, this should be consistent with the policy authority and published objectives.When considering waiving or amending criteria, officials should consider the CGRP key principle ‘Consistency with Grant Guidelines and Established processes’.To ensure potential grantees are not disadvantaged by deviations from the published selection criteria and processes, drafters should ensure that internal processes align with those detailed in the grant opportunity guidelines. Officials should Indicate if eligibility criteria may be waived and on what basis this may occur and document what strategies will be used to mitigate any disadvantage to potential grantees if criteria are waived or amended.Officials must retain appropriate records, consistent with their accountability obligations, and ensure the records are available on request.  |  |
| **What the grant money can be used for?**  | **CGRPs references: 7.5, 13.2, 13.3** |
| Eligible grant activities | Is there clear information on what is an eligible activity and the associated expenses that may be paid for with grant money? |  |
| Eligible locations | If relevant, does this section provide clear information on these locations?  |  |
| Eligible expenditure | If relevant, does this section provide clear information on these items? If operational costs are considered eligible, outline what types of costs are eligible. It could include overheads (rent, electricity, water, etc), vehicle leasing, printing or stationery costs, where these costs are directly related to the delivery of the activity being provided for under the agreement. |  |
| What the grant money cannot be used for | If relevant, does this section provide clear information on these items?  |  |
| **The assessment criteria**  | **CGRPs references: 4.5, 4.6, 4.10, 13.2, 13.3** |
| The assessment criteria | Are the assessment criteria clear?Is it clear whether the criteria are equally considered or if weighting is applied and what that is?If not a competitive process, is it clear how the criteria will be assessed? Must all responses to criteria meet a minimum assessed standard? Are all the criteria for assessment of the application and determining value with relevant money clearly set out in this section?**Note**: If there are other factors, prioritisations or considerations that will be considered when determining suitability and value with relevant money, they should form part of the assessment criteria, outlining what the other factors are and how they will be applied.  |  |
| National Agreement on Closing the Gap | If funding will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, outline here any specific assessment criteria that applicants are required to address. The National Indigenous Australians Agency has developed a [Grants Prioritisation Guide](https://www.niaa.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2024-04/niaa-ctg-grants-prioritisation-guide-1.pdf) which provides entities with suggested approaches to prioritise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations during grant design and administration. |  |
| **How to apply**  | **CGRPs references: 4.6, 5.2, 7.5, 9.4** |
| How to apply | Is sufficient information provided to allow an applicant to understand the requirements to make and lodge an application? Is there an application form?Is the application form on GrantConnect, is it referenced and is the URL provided? |  |
| Attachments to the application | If there are further attachments required, is this clear?Is information on these attachments, i.e. business case, budget, risk management plan, etc. included? |  |
| Joint (consortia) applications | If permitted, are the requirements for joint applications clearly stated? |  |
| Timing of grant opportunity processes | Are times and/or dates included for applications to open, close, be assessed, take effect etc.? |  |
| Questions during the application process | Is there information on where applicants can direct questions and seek information and how they will be addressed? |  |
| **The grant selection process** | **CGRPs references: 2.2, 4.5, 4.7, 12, 11.3, 13.3, 14.3-4** |
| The grant selection process | Is the type of process clearly stated?If the process being undertaken is not an open and competitive one, is it clear why this approach has been taken and how any potential consequences of the process will be managed? (i.e. for a demand driven process with a set amount of funding how will oversubscription be managed, will applicants be alerted that the funding is exhausted? if so, how?)Are eligibility criteria checked prior to assessment?Is the order of application receipt relevant?How will value with relevant money be considered? Is this mentioned as a prime consideration of the selection process? If there is a two-stage process, has this been clearly set out in the guidelines?  |  |
| Assessment of grant applications | Is the process explained? Is it clear who will be assessing the applications?Will further checks be undertaken beyond the application form information? |  |
| Prioritisation or Other factors determining value with relevant money | Grant opportunity guidelines should clearly explain any information that may relevant to the selection of grantees, including prioritisation processes or any other factors that may be considered, and how these will be assessed or applied.Additional factors used to determine value with relevant money or suitability for funding should ideally form part of the assessment criteria and be set out in the assessment criteria section, so applicants have the opportunity to address them. Where factors that do not form part of the assessment criteria are to be used (such as consideration of broader Government policies or outcomes), these factors should be set out. If prioritising specific organisations or sectors, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, outline any additional factors beyond eligibility and assessment criteria that will be considered. |  |
| **Successful grant applications**  | **CGRP references 7.5, 7.8, 8.5, 9.1** |
| Grant agreement | Is it clear what type of grant agreement will be entered into?Officials are encouraged to use one of the whole of government templates. In determining which grant agreement is the most appropriate, you should consider a range of factors such as value, duration of grant, experience of the grantee etc. Monetary thresholds should NOT be the primary determinant of the type of agreement used.You should indicate in this section if you will notify the grantee before a grant agreement ends whether the grant agreement is likely to be extended or varied; whether a new grant opportunity will be provided; or whether the agreement will cease. You should include the length of the notice period.If indexation has been included in the grant funding decision, include information on the amount/percentage and when indexation will be paid. |  |
| Specific legislation, policies and industry standards | If compliance with specific legislation or policies such as the child protection or multicultural access and equity policies, or industry standards are used to determine a potential grant applicant’s eligibility this should be outlined in section 4. Where a grantee will be required to maintain compliance through the life of the grant agreement, this should be outlined here. |  |
| **How we monitor your grant activity**  | **CGRP references 6.2, 9.1, 9.5** |
| Reporting | Guidelines should include information on any reporting or acquittal requirements. The proportionality principle should be applied when determining the reporting and acquittal requirements for the grants. |  |
| **Probity** | **CGRP references 15.4, 15.6, 15.9** |
| Probity | Grants administration by officials and grantees incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, corruption, unlawful activities and other inappropriate behaviour.Outline here what will be required of grantees in relation to monitoring, managing and reporting fraud, corruption and unlawful activities.Officials and grantees should be aware of their obligations under the NACC Act. |  |
| Conflicts of interest | Outline in the guidelines how any conflicts of interest will be managed. |  |