



Factsheet

Stronger Communities Programme Round 8

The Stronger Communities Programme supports the Australian Government's commitment to deliver social benefits in communities across Australia by funding small capital projects in each of the 151 Federal Electorates. The program is part of the government's October 2022-23 budget initiatives focussed on making local economies stronger and boosting community organisations. Round 8 of the program will run through to 31 December 2023.

What does it offer?

For Round 8 of the program, \$22.7 million is available to provide up to \$150,000 to each federal electorate for eligible small capital projects that encourage and support participation in local projects, improve local community participation and contribute to vibrant and viable communities.

A maximum of 20 projects will be funded in each federal electorate.

Round 8 of the program aims to support communities recover from the widespread impacts of adverse weather events and current economic pressures. For this round, grant funding will be up to 100 per cent of eligible project costs except for local governing bodies where grant funding will be up to 50 per cent of eligible project costs. Local governing bodies must provide matched funding contributions towards their eligible project.

- The minimum grant amount is \$2,500
- The maximum grant amount is \$20,000.
- The maximum cost of your project cannot exceed \$50,000.

How does it work?

Local Federal Members of Parliament (MP) may choose to participate in the program. If they do, they must consult with either an existing consultation committee or establish a new consultation committee with representatives from the local community.

The MP and the consultation committee identify potential applicants and projects in their electorate. The identified projects must be consistent with the intended outcomes of the program and eligibility criteria.

The MP will invite potential applicants to apply for a grant to deliver specific small capital projects. The invitation will provide details on how to apply via the online grant portal. Your MP must advise the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (the department/we) of the basis for project selection.

To be eligible you must be invited by your MP to apply and your project must:

- be a small capital works or capital expenditure project
- deliver social benefits to your community
- include eligible activities and eligible expenditure
- have at least \$2,500 in eligible expenditure unless the applicant is a local governing body which requires at least \$5,000 in eligible expenditure.
- have a maximum project cost of \$50,000

You must complete your project no later than 31 December 2023

The project and grant amount in your application must be the same as that agreed to and nominated by your MP.

Who can apply?

To be eligible you must

- be invited to apply by your MP
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN)

and be one of the following entities:

- an incorporated not-for-profit organisation (the [grant opportunity guidelines](#)) provide detail on how you must demonstrate your 'not-for-profit' status)
- a local governing body as defined by the *Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995*
- a Commonwealth, state or territory government agency or entity that is a fire service, rural fire service, country fire authority, state emergency service or similar.
- an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust with responsibility for a community asset or property. You will be required to provide relevant trust documents.

For further information on program eligibility refer to the [grant opportunity guidelines](#).

Who is not eligible to apply?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- a for profit organisation
- an individual
- a partnership
- a Regional Development Australia Committee
- a university, technical college or school
- a hospital
- a Commonwealth, State or Territory government agency or body (including government business enterprises) unless listed in section 4.1 of the [grant opportunity guidelines](#).
- an organisation, or your project partner is an organisation, included on the National Redress Scheme's website on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified

their intent to join the Scheme' (www.nationalredress.gov.au)

- an employer of 100 or more employees that has [not complied](#) with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act (2012)*.

Can I apply if my organisation is not an incorporated entity?

If your organisation is not an incorporated entity, you are not eligible to apply. However, you may be able to nominate an eligible project sponsor to apply on your behalf provided they agree to sponsor your organisation and they also meet the program's eligibility criteria.

The project sponsor can apply on your behalf and must:

- be invited to apply by your MP
- meet the program's eligibility criteria
- submit the Stronger Communities Programme online application
- if successful, enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth
- ensure that the grant is spent on the project and in accordance with the agreement.

What activities are eligible?

Eligible activities must directly relate to the project and can include:

- fit out, alterations and/or extensions to existing premises e.g. air-conditioning, kitchen upgrades, TVs, furniture, fixtures and fittings, painting
- acquisition and installation of equipment, including ICT hardware and associated operating software and initial user licences. See examples in section 5.1 of the [grant opportunity guidelines](#).
- modifications and refurbishments to leased buildings or grounds, providing approval has been given by the owner
- upgrades, construction and fit-out of community spaces, e.g. men's sheds, community centres, scout halls etc.
- development or upgrade of bike paths, streetscapes, skate parks or community gardens

- upgrades of sporting facilities and fields including new scoreboards, spectator seating, goalposts, fit-out of change rooms, new canteen, new lights, medical equipment, upgrade drainage and water systems, gymnasiums
- the purchase of musical instruments, sports equipment and uniforms that remain the property of the organisation
- upgrade of facilities to provide inclusive access
- upgrade or installation of park furniture including shade/shelters, BBQs, toilet facilities, drinking fountains
- acquiring equipment for the local State Emergency Service and rural fire brigades
- acquiring vehicles and trailers (and their modification) for community transport/services, surf lifesaving, medical transport.

How will my application be assessed?

It is important to note that being invited to submit an application by your MP does not guarantee that your application will be successful.

We will assess your application for completeness and against all the eligibility criteria.

To be recommended for funding, your project must meet all eligibility criteria, provide value for money and be considered a proper use of public resources.

The Program Delegate decides which grants to approve taking into account the eligibility assessment by the department, any reputational risk to the Australian Government, information you provide, and the availability of grant funds.

When can I start my project?

You may start your project from the date you submit your application online.

If you choose to start your project before you enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth, any costs incurred are at your own risk. You must incur the project expenditure between the project start and end date for it to be eligible. You will not receive any funding if your application is unsuccessful.

What will I need to do if successful?

You must enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth.

The grant agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount we will pay
- proportion of eligible expenditure covered by the grant (grant percentage).

We will pay 100 per cent of the grant on execution of the grant agreement. You will be required to report how you spent the grant funds at the completion of the project.

How do I apply?

You should read the [grant opportunity guidelines](#) before you apply.

To apply you must

- be invited by your MP to submit an application for your project
- complete the online Stronger Communities Program application form accessed by the link in the email you receive from your MP
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility criteria
- include all requested attachments.

Where can I find more information?

For more information, visit business.gov.au or call 13 28 46.