



**Australian Government**  
**National Emergency Management Agency**

## GRANT OPPORTUNITY GUIDELINES

# Protecting Our Communities (Disaster Resilience) Program

Opening date:	5 June 2023
Closing date and time:	5:00pm AEST on 15 June 2023
Commonwealth policy entity:	National Emergency Management Agency

Enquiries:	If you have any questions, contact: Email: <a href="mailto:RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au">RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au</a> Phone: 0482 655 902
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Type of grant opportunity:	Closed non-competitive

During the 2022 election campaign, the Australian Government committed funding to communities across Australia to increase their disaster resilience and preparedness for future disasters.

The Government is committed to delivering funding programs that are transparent and based on clearly defined eligibility criteria and assessment process. The **Protecting Our Communities (Disaster Resilience)** program has been developed to deliver important disaster resilience projects for communities that represent value for money, and have been identified by communities to improve their disaster resilience and preparedness for further disasters at the local level.

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# 1 Protecting Our Communities (Disaster Resilience) Program processes

## **Protecting Our Communities (Disaster Resilience) Program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives**

This grant program contributes to the National Emergency Management Agency's (the Agency) Outcome 1. The Agency works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines \(CGRGs\)](#).

### **The grant opportunity opens**

We publish the grant guidelines on [GrantConnect](#)



### **Identified organisations will be invited to submit an application**

As an identified invited organisation, we invite you to submit an application for funding for a project identified by the Australian Government. Only those organisations nominated by the Australian Government can be considered.



### **You complete and submit a grant application**

You complete the application form and address all of the eligibility and assessment criteria to be considered for a grant.



### **We assess all grant applications**

We assess the applications against eligibility and assessment criteria including the overall consideration of value with relevant money.



### **We make grant recommendations**

We provide advice to the Program Delegate on the value for money assessment of each application.



### **Grant decisions are made**

The Program Delegate decides which applications are successful.



### **We notify you of the outcome**

We advise you of the outcome of your application.



### **We enter into a grant agreement**

If you are successful we will enter into a grant agreement with you. The type of grant agreement is determined by us and based on the nature of the grant and is proportionate to the risks involved.



### **Delivery of grant**

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. We manage the grant by working with you, monitoring progress and making payments when program requirements are met.



**Evaluation of the Protecting Our Communities (Disaster Resilience) Program**

We may evaluate your specific grant activity and the program as a whole. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

## 1.1 Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the Protecting Our Communities (Disaster Resilience) Program (the Program).

The Program will deliver commitments of up to \$5 million announced by the Government ahead of the 2022 federal election.

The Program is non-competitive and projects identified by the Australian Government will be delivered. If your project has been identified to receive grant funding you will be invited to apply for the program.

You should not assume that a commitment of funding and an invitation to apply means that funding approval is guaranteed. All applications will be subject to a robust assessment criteria to ensure projects are able to be delivered on the ground in a timely manner and provide value with relevant money to the community in line with Government accountability and value for money considerations.

You must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant program
- the application process
- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how grant applications are considered and selected
- the governance arrangements
- how applicants are notified and receive grant payments
- how applicants will be monitored and evaluated
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the program.

## 2 About the grant program

The Program was included in the Government measure as part of the 2022-23 Budget in October 2023, **and** will run from the 2022-23 financial year.

The purpose of this program is to deliver the Government's commitments to increasing disaster resilience and preparedness across Australia. Funded projects are intended to assist communities to build resilience and preparedness for future disasters.

The objectives of the program are to:

- increase disaster resilience through building or upgrading telecommunications infrastructure, road infrastructure, evacuation centres, cyclone shelters and emergency management precincts;
- improve community preparedness through volunteer training and developing disaster management plans; and
- enhance the ability to respond to disasters buy purchasing essential equipment, such as water tankers.

The National Emergency Management Agency (the Agency) administers the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#) (CGRGs)<sup>1</sup>.

## 3 Grant amount and grant period

### 3.1 Grants available

The Australian Government has announced a total of \$34.3 million of administered funding from 2022-23 for the Program. These guidelines cover one portion of the Program (up to \$5 million).

There is no minimum grant amount. The maximum grant available under the Program will be \$5 million (GST exclusive). Grants cannot exceed the amount identified for your project in the invitation to apply for the program.

### 3.2 Grant period

Funding will be available for Australian Government identified projects that are scheduled for completion with final payment made before 30 September 2026. The maximum grant period for individual grants is three (3) years from the time the grant agreement is executed.

You must complete your project by the project end date specified in your grant agreement which cannot be after 30 June 2026.

Evaluation activities may be considered, to inform future, similar programs.

## 4 Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all the eligibility criteria. If you are deemed ineligible you will be advised in writing.

We cannot provide a grant if you receive funding from another government source for the same purpose.

### 4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible you must be the organisation with overall responsibility to deliver the project and be invited to deliver a project identified by the Australian Government and:

- have an Australian Business Number (ABN); and
- be registered for the purposes of GST and remain registered for the duration of the grant; and
- have an account with an Australian financial institution; and
- be one of the following entity types:
  - an incorporated association
  - a registered charity or not-for-profit organisation
  - an Australian local government body
  - an Australian state or territory government body
  - an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust
  - an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Corporation registered under the [Corporations \(Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander\) Act 2006](#)
  - Publicly owned corporation
  - Private businesses

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf>  
Protecting Our Communities (Disaster Resilience) Program



We can only accept applications from applicants that have been invited by the Australian Government to apply for a grant. The list of eligible applicants was determined based on the owners of the projects.

If your organisation has been invited to apply for the Program but is not an eligible entity or there are concerns about your organisation's capacity to deliver the project, you may be able to nominate a 'lead organisation' that meets the above criteria.

The lead organisation must be authorised to enter into a grant agreement and will be responsible for any obligations under the agreement with the Australian Government, including all reporting requirements and completion of the project. This arrangement must be approved by the Assistant Coordinator General, Resilience and Community Programs, National Emergency Management Agency. Any requests of this nature must be made to [RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au](mailto:RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au) before your application is submitted.

## 4.2 Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply if you:

- are not identified by the Australian Government to receive funding under the Program or are not a sponsor organisation approved to deliver the nominated project by the Agency.
- are 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](http://www.nationalredress.gov.au))
- are an employer of 100 or more employees that has not complied with [Workplace Gender Equality Act \(2012\)](#)
- are an individual
- are an individual partnership or trust (however, an incorporated trustee may apply on behalf of a not-for-profit trust organisation)
- any organisation not included in [section 3.1](#).

# 5 What the grant money can be used for

## 5.1 Eligible grant activities

To be eligible your project must

- increase the disaster resilience and/or disaster preparedness of the community;
- be consistent with the intent of the announced commitment; and
- for infrastructure projects, not be located on privately owned land where you do not have a formal arrangement, such as a lease, for use of the land, and comprises at least one of the following activities:
  - constructing new infrastructure
  - upgrading existing infrastructure
  - extending existing infrastructure
  - replacing infrastructure where there is a significant increase in benefit
  - fit out, alterations and/or extensions to existing premises
  - purchase of fixed equipment / assets that are related to your community infrastructure project; and

If the grant activity is part of a larger project you should provide evidence to show how the grant activity can be delivered in isolation and the outcomes to be achieved as a result of the grant.

The Program Delegate makes the final decision on what are eligible grant activities and may also approve other activities.

## 5.2 Eligible expenditure

You can only spend the grant on eligible expenditure you have incurred undertaking eligible project activities.

Eligible expenditure items will be confirmed in the grant agreement.

As part of your application we may ask you to verify project costs. You may need to provide evidence such as recent quotes for major costs.

Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The Program Delegate makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be a direct cost of the project;
- not be listed as an ineligible expenditure item.

The expenditure on your grant should be incurred between the start date and completion date for your project for it to be eligible.

If you have incurred expenditure prior to the execution of the grant agreement and the expenditure relates to an eligible activity as listed above and consistent with the original intent of the commitment, you can submit a request for reimbursement to [RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au](mailto:RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au). This may be approved at the discretion of the Program Owner.

## 5.3 What the grant money cannot be used for

You cannot use the grant for the following activities:

- purchase of land or buildings
- costs associated with existing staff of your organisation including wages, unless approved prior to entering into an agreement.
- employee on-costs such as superannuation, holiday loading, overheads, and consumables such as paper, printer cartridges, office supplies, brochures and other marketing materials, kitchen supplies or food and beverages or catering unless an exemption is sought and approved in the case of very remote locations
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation e.g. business case
- subsidy of general ongoing administration of an organisation such as electricity, phone and rent
- temporary relocation costs
- ongoing upgrades, updates and maintenance of existing ICT systems; the cost of ongoing subscription-based software; and IT support memberships and warranties for purchases
- domestic or overseas travel
- funding for the development of private or commercial ventures;
- funding to purchase items that will not remain the property of the organisation including items to be given away; and
- funding for associated project activities that have received other Commonwealth funding.

For guidance on ineligible expenditure, see [Appendix B](#).

You may apply for a partial or full exemption for an item listed as ineligible if you can demonstrate with evidence that more efficient and cost effective to do so. Your exemption request will be

reviewed and the Program Delegate will make the final decision on what are ineligible grant activities.

## 6 The assessment criteria

This assessment process allows the Australian Government to ensure your project is eligible for funding under this Program.

You must address all of the following assessment criteria in your application. We will assess your application based on the weighting given to each criterion.

We will only consider funding applications that score at least 60 per cent against each assessment criterion. Applications that do not meet the benchmark for the criteria overall will not be considered value for money and will not be awarded funding. Where we identify that more information is required to determine whether the proposal is value for money we will work with you to obtain that information.

You should provide evidence to support your claims against the criteria.

The Assessment Criteria for the Program are:

- Benefits of your project to the community in relation to disaster resilience and/or disaster preparedness
- Project viability and sustainability, including value for money
- Applicant capacity, capability and resources to carry out the project.

### 6.1 Assessment criterion 1

#### Benefits of your project to the community (20 points)

You should demonstrate this by identifying:

- a. Why the project is needed by the community and how they will benefit from the project and increase their disaster resilience and/or preparedness,
- b. The broader benefits your project will deliver for the region and community during and beyond the term of funding.
- c. How the project outcome will be used by the community in preparation, during, and after a disaster event.

Examples of how your project could deliver disaster preparedness and increase resilience may include but are not limited to:

- ensuring the safety of residents through increasing the resilience of infrastructure
- improving community preparedness to future disasters through training and planning
- ensuring communities are better placed to respond to disasters through purchasing or installing equipment.

### 6.2 Assessment criterion 2

#### Project viability and sustainability (15 points)

You should demonstrate this through identifying:

- a. how grant funding will impact the project including:
  - whether the project will proceed without funding
  - the scope and timing of the project.
- b. your readiness to commence the project including:
  - whether regulatory and/or development approvals are required or in place (infrastructure projects only)
  - project designs and costings are underway or finalised

- authority from the land or infrastructure owner to undertake the project at the nominated site(s) (infrastructure projects only)
  - funding contributions from all sources
  - whether community consultation has taken place (infrastructure projects only).
- c. your plan to manage the project including addressing scope, implementation plan, procurement and works, timeframes, budget and risk management, commensurate to the size and nature of the project.

You must attach a current project budget to your application. If you are seeking a grant amount greater than \$200,000 you must also include a project plan.

### 6.3 Assessment criterion 3

#### Your capacity, capability and resources to carry out the project (15 points)

You should demonstrate this through identifying:

- a. your track record with similar projects and access to personnel with the right skills and experience; any support or investment that will be leveraged to progress your project.
- b. the legal and financial status of the applicant including:
  - your financial capacity to progress the project. This is particularly relevant where payments of funding are made in arrears
  - the nature of financial policies and procedures, and the governance structure of your organisation
- c. your ability to maintain the project for the duration of the operational period.

## 7 How to apply

Before applying, you must read and understand these guidelines, the sample application form and the sample grant agreements, which are available on [GrantConnect](#). Any alterations and addenda<sup>2</sup> will be published on GrantConnect and by registering on this website, you will be automatically notified of any changes. GrantConnect is the authoritative source for grants information.

We will write to applicants of identified projects outlining the process for progressing an application. This correspondence will include web links for the:

- Program guidelines
- application form

To apply you must:

- complete the application form provided with your invitation and submit via email to [RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au](mailto:RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au)
- provide all the information requested
- address **all** eligibility criteria and assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments. Further information on attachments can be found at [Appendix C](#)
- submit your application within 10 working days of receiving the invitation to submit an application for funding.

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<sup>2</sup> Alterations and addenda include but are not limited to: corrections to currently published documents, changes to close times for applications, Questions and Answers (Q&A) documents and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents

Only projects identified by the Australian Government and invited to apply will be considered.

You are responsible for ensuring that your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the [Criminal Code 1995](#) and we will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

If you need further guidance around the application process, or if you are unable to submit an application via email, you can contact us by email, at [RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au](mailto:RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au).

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should advise us immediately by emailing [RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au](mailto:RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au). If we find an error or information that is missing or we require clarification or additional information from you that will not change the nature of your application, we may contact you. Whilst we will make reasonable attempts to resolve any questions, the ultimate responsibility for providing sufficient information to enable us to assess your application rests with you.

You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents.

We will acknowledge that we have received your application within three (3) working days. This date initiates the proposed timeline referred to in [section 6.2](#).

**Requests for additional funding from the Australian Government will not be considered in this Program.**

We can only accept applications using the Program application form and all requirements of this form must be addressed.

Further requests for an extension to the application submission date or minor changes of scope must be provided to us in writing, clearly stating the reasons and revised timeframes for project delivery, prior to the submission due date.

We will make a recommendation to the decision maker as to whether a change of scope should be considered, or that the funding commitment should be withdrawn.

Applications must be submitted via email to [RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au](mailto:RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au). This will be provided in your invitation to submit an application for funding.

## 7.1 Timing of grant Program processes

You **must** submit an application within 10 working days of the date the invitation to apply is emailed to you. Applications submitted outside this period will not be considered unless you have previously obtained approval from us for an extension.

Once we receive your completed application form and supporting documentation, we will undertake an assessment of the project proposal against the factors listed in these guidelines. Once the assessment of the project has been completed, a recommendation on funding will be provided to the decision maker.

The decision maker will consider whether the proposal will make proper use of Commonwealth resources, as required by Commonwealth legislation, and whether any specific requirements will be imposed as a condition of funding, should funding be approved.

If the project is approved, you will be notified in writing and will be required to negotiate and enter into a grant agreement with the Australian Government. If you do not enter into a grant agreement within this period and have not received approval from us to extend the time period, the offer may be withdrawn. The grant agreement must be executed prior to any payments being made.

Timelines for approval and notification will be dependent upon you providing sufficient project information for an assessment to be completed and a grant agreement executed.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant Program

Activity	Timeframe
Application submitted	Within 10 days of the invitation to apply being sent
Assessment of applications	5 days from all necessary information being provided
Approval of outcomes of selection process	5 days from completion of assessments
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	Within 5 days of Program Delegate's decision.
Notification to successful applicants	Within 5 days of Program Delegate's decision.
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	5 days from notification of approval of funding. If the Grant Agreement is unable to be finalised within four (4) weeks of offer the approval may be withdrawn.
Earliest start date of project	Must be on or after the agreement is executed by both parties.
End date of grant activity or agreement	To be negotiated through the grant agreement. All projects should be complete by 30 June 2026

Note: Days implies working days.

## 7.2 Questions during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period, contact us phone by email at [RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au](mailto:RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au).

# 8 The grant selection process

## 8.1 Assessment of grant applications

We first review your application against the eligibility criteria. If eligible, we will then assess it against the assessment criteria. Only eligible applications will proceed to the assessment stage.

We consider your application on:

- how well it meets the criteria
- whether it provides value with relevant money.<sup>3</sup>

When assessing the extent to which the application represents value with relevant money, we will have regard to:

- the overall objective/s to be achieved in providing the grant
- the relative value of the grant sought
- the extent to which the evidence in the application demonstrates that it will contribute to meeting the outcomes/objectives
- whether the project has a risk profile that is acceptable to the Australian Government, with any

<sup>3</sup> See glossary for an explanation of 'value with money'.

identified risk able to be efficiently and effectively managed

- the extent to which the evidence provided confirms the project matches the stated commitment of funding.

The threshold level of the project will then determine the type of agreement.

The threshold levels and risk considerations are shown in the table below.

Table 2: Project Threshold Levels

Threshold Level	Type of Agreement	Factors considered
<p>Threshold One</p> <p>≤ \$100,000 grant value</p> <p>&gt;\$100,000 and ≤\$200,000 grant value where the project is assessed as low risk.</p>	Letter of Agreement	<p>Applicant’s grant management history with Commonwealth, state and local governments.</p> <p>Project Scope, that is, if the project is a simple or low risk project such as purchase of equipment, upgrading signs, developing plans and minor infrastructure upgrades.</p>
<p>Threshold Two</p> <p>&gt; \$100,000 ≤ \$2,000,000 grant value</p> <p>Higher risk Threshold One projects</p>	Simple Grant Agreement	<p>Applicant’s grant management history with Commonwealth, state and local governments.</p> <p>Project Scope, that is the project is more complex or higher risk than the low risk project described in threshold one and may include upgrades of existing buildings and infrastructure.</p>
<p>Threshold Three – All Other Projects</p> <p>&gt; \$2,000,000 grant value</p> <p>Higher risk Threshold One or Two Projects</p> <p>More than one project contracted under the one Agreement</p>	Standard Grant Agreement	All grants that don’t meet the requirements of Thresholds One and Two are automatically Threshold Three grants.

### 8.2 Who will assess applications?

We (the Agency) will assess each eligible application against the assessment criteria.

When the assessment is completed a recommendation will be made to the Program Delegate on which applications to approve for a grant.

### 8.3 Who will approve grants?

The Program delegation lies with a Senior Executive Service (SES) Band 1 official at the National Emergency Management Agency. They will decide which grants to approve considering our recommendations and the availability of grant funds for the purposes of the grant program.



The Program Delegate's decision is final in all matters, including:

- the approval of the grant
- the grant funding amount to be awarded
- the terms and conditions of the grant.

We cannot review decisions about the outcome of your application.

## 9 Notification of application outcomes

We will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing. If you are successful, we will advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will give you an opportunity to discuss the outcome.

### 9.1 Feedback on your application

If you are unsuccessful, you may ask for feedback within one month of being advised of the outcome. This request must be sought in writing by email at [RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au](mailto:RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au). We will give written feedback within one month of your request.

## 10 Successful grant applications

### 10.1 The grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth.

We use three types of grant agreements in this program. The type of grant agreement selected for use will depend on a number of factors, including, but not limited to, the size and complexity of your project. We may also use a bespoke agreement where it is required by the nature of the project.

Each grant agreement has general terms and conditions that cannot be changed. The grant agreement outlines the grant requirements. There may be specific conditions attached to the funding approval as a result of the assessment or further consideration by the Program Delegate. These will be identified in the offer of funding or during the grant agreement negotiations.

Where you have been invited to apply for funding for more than one project under this program, we **may** use a single grant agreement for multiple projects where it is effective and efficient to do so.

We **must** execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. We are not responsible for any of your expenditure until a grant agreement is executed by both parties.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement.

#### 10.1.1 Letter of Acceptance, Simple Grant Agreement and Standard Grant Agreement

We will use either a letter of acceptance, simple grant agreement or standard grant agreement for this Program. The type of grant agreement to be used will be determined by the Agency. See Table 2 at Section 7.1 for details.

You will have 5 days from the date of a written offer to sign this grant agreement with the Commonwealth ('execute' means both you and the Commonwealth have signed the grant agreement). During this time, we will work with you to finalise details.

The offer may lapse if both parties do not sign the grant agreement within this time. Under certain circumstances, we **may** extend this period.

You may request changes to the project details in the grant agreement. However, we will review any required changes to these details to ensure they do not impact the grant as approved by the Program Delegate.



## 10.2 Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

Whilst you are required to be compliant with all relevant laws and regulations and Australian Government sanctions, you may be requested to demonstrate compliance with certain legislation/policies/industry standards.

In particular, you will be required to comply with:

- all building and construction requirements relevant to your state/territory (infrastructure projects only); and
- all legislation in relation to working with children, where applicable.

It is a condition of the grant funding that you meet these requirements. These requirements will be included in your grant agreement. If you do not adhere to the conditions of the grant agreement, the agreement may be terminated.

### 10.2.1 Child Safe Requirements

You must comply with all relevant legislation relating to the employment or engagement of anyone working on the project who may interact with children, including all necessary Working With Children checks.

You must implement the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)<sup>4</sup> endorsed by the Commonwealth.

You will need to complete a risk assessment to identify the level of responsibility for children and the level of risk of harm or abuse and put appropriate strategies in place to manage those risks. You must update this risk assessment at least annually. You will also need to establish a training and compliance regime to ensure personnel are aware of, and comply with, the risk assessment requirements, relevant legislation, including mandatory reporting requirements and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

You will be required to provide an annual statement of compliance with these requirements in relation to working with children.

## 10.3 How we pay the grant

Where the value of a grant is \$100,000 or less, a payment of up to 90% of the total grant value will be made on execution of the grant agreement. The amount of upfront payment will be negotiated as part of the grant agreement.

Grant funding is not provided in a lump sum or in advance for grants greater than \$100,000.

The grant agreement will state the:

- description of the project to be delivered including the identified grant activities
- maximum grant amount to be paid
- any financial contributions you must make (if applicable)
- any financial contribution provided by a third party (if applicable) and
- milestone requirements, timing and any associated payments.

A payment schedule will be negotiated with you. Grant funding will be paid generally in arrears.

- as you achieve agreed milestones; and
- on our acceptance of satisfactory progress reports, which will include evidence of achievements.

We set aside at least 10 per cent of the total grant for the final payment. We will pay this when you

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<sup>4</sup> <https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au/national-principles>  
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submit a satisfactory project completion report demonstrating you have completed all outstanding obligations for the project.

The Program Delegate **may** approve alternative arrangements on a discretionary basis.

We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra costs, you must meet them yourself.

## 10.4 Grants payments and GST

Eligible applicants are required to be registered for the Goods and Services Tax (GST). Where applicable, we will add GST to your grant payment and may issue a recipient created tax invoice or request a tax invoice for the grant payment. You are required to notify us if you intend to change your GST registration status changes during the project period. GST does not apply to grant payments to government related entities<sup>5</sup>.

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](#)<sup>6</sup>. We do not provide advice on your particular taxation circumstances.

## 11 Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website twenty-one (21) calendar days after the date of effect, as required by Section 5.3 of the [CGRGs](#). We will publish non-sensitive details of successful projects on GrantConnect.

## 12 How we monitor your grant activity

### 12.1 Keeping us informed

You **must** let us know as soon as you become aware of anything likely to affect your project or organisation. This includes any anticipated changes to the project outcomes.

We need to know of any key changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your project, carry on business and pay debts due.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- name
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details.
- GST status.

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement, you must contact us immediately. You must notify us of any activities regarding the project such as instances of allegations of fraud or illegal activity.

You **must** notify us of events or publicity relating to your grant and provide an opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend. The requirements relating to events are identified in the agreement.

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<sup>5</sup> See Australian Taxation Office ruling GSTR 2012/2 available at [ato.gov.au](#)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ato.gov.au/>

## 12.2 Reporting

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. We will provide templates for these reports. We will remind you of your reporting obligations before a report is due. We will expect you to report on at least:

- progress against agreed project milestones
- contributions of participants directly related to the project (if applicable)
- expenditure of the grant
- achievement of any specific conditions and
- the outcomes delivered by the project.

We will work with you so that you can provide the necessary information that we need to assess your progress. The level of information required will be relative to the complexity of the project and grant amount.

We will monitor progress by assessing the reports you submit and may conduct site visits or request records to confirm details of your reports if necessary. We may need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

### 12.2.1 Progress reports

Progress reports must:

- include evidence of your progress towards completion of agreed activities and outcomes
- show the total eligible expenditure incurred to date, including evidence of expenditure
- be submitted by the report due date (you can submit reports ahead of time if you have completed relevant activities).

We will only make grant payments when we receive satisfactory progress reports. We **may** also require that all previous grants payments have been expended or committed prior to making a payment.

You must discuss any reporting delays with us as soon as you become aware of them.

### 12.2.2 Ad-hoc reports

We may ask you for ad-hoc reports on your grant. We will only do this where it is necessary to obtain an update on progress, or identify any significant delays or difficulties in completing the project.

### 12.2.3 Completion report

When you complete the project, you must submit a completion report.

Completion reports must:

- identify how outcomes have been achieved
- include the agreed evidence as specified in the grant agreement
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred
- note any factors affecting the project and outcomes
- be submitted within the time specified in the grant agreement and in the format provided in the grant agreement.

## 12.3 Financial declaration / Audited financial acquittal report

We will ask you to provide a declaration that the grant money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement and to report on any underspends of the grant money.

In addition, we may ask you to provide an independently audited financial acquittal report. A

financial acquittal report will verify that you spent the grant in accordance with the grant agreement. The financial acquittal report template is provided with the Completion Report.

Your grant agreement will clearly outline your reporting requirements.

#### 12.4 Grant agreement variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect your progress. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your grant agreement. You can request a variation by completing a Request for Variation Form to be supplied by us.

We cannot increase the amount of funding you receive, regardless of the reason. We will only consider variations to the length of your project up to the end of the Program period. You should not assume that a variation request will be agreed. We will consider your request based on provisions in the grant agreement and the likely impact on achieving outcomes.

#### 12.5 Compliance visits

We may visit you during or at the completion of your project to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

#### 12.6 Record keeping

We may also request or inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement.

#### 12.7 Evaluation

We may evaluate the Program to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your application and reports for this purpose. We may also interview you, or ask you for more information to help us understand the impact of your grant and to evaluate how effective the program was in achieving its outcomes.

We may contact you for up to 5 years after you finish your project for more information to assist with this evaluation.

#### 12.8 Acknowledgement

Successful applicants may be required to comply with a range of branding and recognition requirements which may include holding an official opening event. These requirements are identified in the agreement and guidance is provided on our website.

You must also notify us of any other events relating to your project where there may be opportunities for the relevant Minister or Government representative to attend. These requirements are also identified in the agreement.

All signage, publicity and public statements must acknowledge the Australian Government funding using words and branding that are approved by us.

## 13 Probity

The Australian Government will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct, and is consistent with the CGRGs.

These guidelines may be changed from time-to-time by the Agency. When this happens, the revised guidelines will be published on GrantConnect.

#### 13.1 Enquiries and feedback

The Agency's Complaints Management procedures apply to complaints about this grant program. All complaints about a grant process must be provided in writing.

Any questions you have about grant decisions for this grant opportunity should be sent to

[RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au](mailto:RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au).

The Agency welcomes your feedback about the policy, programs or service provided by us. Any feedback should be submitted to us in writing via:

Email: [RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au](mailto:RegionalPrograms@nema.gov.au) or

Mail: Director, Regional Programs  
National Emergency Management Agency  
PO Box 133  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

If you do not agree with the way the Agency has handled your complaint, you may complain to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#). The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the Agency. There is no fee for making a complaint, and the Ombudsman may conduct an independent investigation.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072  
Email: [ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au)  
Website: [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)

### 13.2 Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if the Agency's staff or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel:

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program.

You will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you **must** inform the Agency in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)](#) of the [Public Service Act 1999 \(Cth\)](#). Other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

### 13.3 Disclosure of Commonwealth, State or Territory financial penalties

You must disclose whether any of your board members, management or persons of authority have been subject to any pecuniary penalty, whether civil, criminal or administrative, imposed by a Commonwealth, State, or Territory court or a Commonwealth, State, or Territory entity. If this is the case, you must provide advice to the agency regarding the matter for consideration.

### 13.4 Privacy

We treat your personal information according to the [Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect

- why we collect your personal information
- who we give your personal information to.

Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else for the primary purpose for which it was collected, unless an exemption applies.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information about grant applicants and grant recipients under this grant program in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes disclosing grant information on GrantConnect as required for reporting purposes and giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

We may share the information you give us with other Commonwealth entities for purposes including government administration, research or service delivery, according to Australian laws.

As part of your application, you declare your ability to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Australian Privacy Principles and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and subcontractors that you engage to assist with the activity, in respect of personal information you collect, use, store, or disclose in connection with the activity. Accordingly, you must not do anything, which if done by the Agency would breach an Australian Privacy Principle as defined in the [Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#).

For further information about our privacy obligations (including in relation to how to access or correct personal information or make a complaint) and our contact details for privacy matters, please see our [Privacy Policy](#).

### 13.5 Confidential Information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to disclose to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or grant agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you, or your employees, agents or subcontractors, to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will keep any information in connection with the grant agreement confidential to the extent that it meets all of the three conditions below:

1. you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
2. the information is commercially sensitive and
3. revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

- other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the Program effectively
- employees and contractors of our agency so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery
- other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- the responsible Minister or Assistant Minister, and

- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

The grant agreement may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the grant agreement.

### 13.6 Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about this grant Program, are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982 \(Cth\)](#) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

By mail:           Freedom of Information Officer  
                      National Emergency Management Agency  
                      PO Box 133  
                      CANBERRA ACT 2601

By email:         FOI@nema.gov.au

## 14 Glossary

Term	Definition
accountable authority	see subsection 12(2) of the <a href="#">Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</a>
application process	refers to the steps that must be followed by potential applicants to be considered for a grant. It includes the forms and written documentation which contain eligibility and any assessment criteria to be satisfied.
assessment criteria	are the specified principles or standards, against which applications will be judged.
commencement date	the expected start date for the grant activity.
<a href="#">Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs)</a>	establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this overarching framework non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration.
completion date	the expected date that the project must be completed and the grant spent by.
date of effect	can be the date on which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date. Where there is no grant agreement, entities must publish information on individual grants as soon as practicable.
decision maker	the person who decides to award a grant. Also see Program Delegate.
eligibility criteria	refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.
Commonwealth entity	a Department of State, or a Parliamentary Department, or a listed entity or a body corporate established by a law of the Commonwealth. See subsections 10(1) and (2) of the PGPA Act



Term	Definition
grant	<p>for the purposes of the CGRGs, a 'grant' is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. under which relevant money<sup>7</sup> or other <a href="#">Consolidated Revenue Fund</a> (CRF) money<sup>8</sup> is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth and</li> <li>b. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee to achieve its objectives.</li> </ol>
grant activity/activities	refers to the project that the applicant is required to undertake.
grant agreement	a legally binding contract that sets out the relationship between the parties to the agreement, and specifies the details of the grant.
executed grant agreement	a grant agreement that has been signed by both parties and becomes legally binding from the date of final signature
<a href="#">GrantConnect</a>	is the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs.
Grantee / Applicant	the organisation which has been selected to receive a grant.
Program Delegate	the person who decides to award a grant. The decision maker for the Program is the Assistant Coordinator-General, Resilience and Community Programs Branch, National Emergency Management Agency.
Program Owner	an employee of the Agency who has been authorised by the Minister, or is otherwise duly authorised to carry out the relevant functions in respect of the Program (and all initiatives under the Program).
operational period	the period for which the project must be kept operational as specified in the grant agreement. This will be a minimum of 1 year and up to 5 years after the project acquittal depending on the level of grant funding.
selection process	the method used to select potential applicants. This process involves the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and the assessment criteria.

<sup>7</sup> Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

<sup>8</sup> Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money. Protecting Our Communities (Disaster Resilience) Program

Term	Definition
value for money	<p>'value for money' is a judgement based on the grant proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations.</p> <p>When administering a grant opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the quality of the project proposal and activities</li> <li>• fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives</li> <li>• that the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the applicant and government's outcomes being achieved and</li> <li>• the potential applicant's relevant experience and performance history.</li> </ul>

## Appendix A. Eligible expenditure

This section provides guidance on the eligibility of expenditure for eligible projects.

The Program Delegate makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure in accordance with the guidelines and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be incurred by you within the project period; and
- be a direct cost of the project; or
- be incurred by you to undertake required project audit or signage activities; and
- meet the eligible expenditure guidelines.

You can only use funding for eligible expenditure.

In-kind contributions are not eligible expenditure.

### A.1 How we verify eligible expenditure

We will ask you to verify the project budget you provide in your application and when we negotiate your grant agreement. You may need to provide evidence such as quotes for major costs.

The grant agreement will include details of the evidence you may need to provide when you achieve certain milestones in your project. This may include evidence related to eligible expenditure.

If requested, you will need to provide the agreed evidence along with your progress reports.

You must keep payment records of all eligible expenditure, and be able to provide evidence for how the costs relate to the agreed project activities. At any time, we may ask you to provide records of the expenditure you have paid. If you do not provide these records when requested, the expense may not qualify as eligible expenditure.

At the end of the project, you may be required to provide an independent financial audit of all eligible expenditure from the project.

### A.2 Materials for construction (infrastructure projects only)

We consider costs of acquiring materials for the construction of infrastructure as eligible expenditure. Where possible and suitable for your project, you should use locally procured and sustainable, recycled or repurposed building materials. For example applications of sustainable, recycled or repurposed building materials and to find potential suppliers see the [sustainable and recycled products](#) page on the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's website.

You must list material costs as a separate item within your project budget in the application form where applicable.

Examples of eligible material costs can include:

- building materials
- ICT cabling
- fit out of the infrastructure, such as window dressings
- fixed furniture (e.g. kitchen fit outs as part of the construction of a building)

- landscaping.

You may show expenditure on materials by providing evidence of:

- purchase price
- payments (e.g. tax invoices and receipts from suppliers confirming payment)
- commitment to pay for the materials (e.g. supplier contract, purchase order or executed lease agreement)
- receipt of materials (e.g. supplier or freight documents)
- associated costs such as freight and installation (e.g. supplier documents)

If you claim expenditure for materials, we limit this to:

- the costs of materials
- freight costs.

### A.3 Hired/leased plant

You may lease plant and equipment to support your project and, where possible, you should use local suppliers.

You must calculate eligible expenditure for hired, rented, or leased plant by the number of payment periods where you use the plant for the project multiplied by the period hiring fee. If you purchase plant under a hire purchase agreement, or you use a lease to finance the purchase of the plant, the cost of the item of plant, excluding interest, is capitalised, and then depreciated.

Running costs for hired or leased plant are eligible expenditure but you must be able to verify them. They may include items such as rent, light and power, and repairs and maintenance.

### A.4 Contract expenditure (infrastructure projects only)

Eligible contract expenditure is the cost of work undertaken on any agreed eligible project activities that you contract others to do. This can include contracting:

- another organisation
- an individual who is not an employee, but engaged under a separate contract.

It can also include contracting others on the core elements of the project related to construction.

This may include:

- architect services
- design services
- project management
- quantity surveying
- building services.

Costs for pre-construction activities including architect services, design, surveying, planning, environmental or other regulatory approvals, are limited to 20 per cent of the total amount of eligible project expenditure claimed.

Where possible, you should engage local labour and services.

This must not include existing employees that you pay a salary or a wage.

Where possible, you should engage local contractor/operators. All contractors must have a written contract prior to starting any project work—for example, a formal agreement, letter or purchase order which specifies:

- the nature of the work they perform

- the applicable fees, charges and other costs payable.

Invoices from contractors must contain:

- a detailed description of the nature of the work
- the hours and hourly rates involved
- any specific plant expenses paid.

Invoices must directly relate to the agreed project, and the work must qualify as an eligible expense. The costs must also be reasonable and appropriate for the activities performed.

We will require evidence of contractor expenditure that may include:

- an exchange of letters (including email) setting out the terms and conditions of the proposed contract work
- purchase orders
- supply agreements
- invoices and payment documents.

You must ensure all project contractors keep a record of the costs of their work on the project. We may require you to provide a contractor's records of their costs of doing project work. If you cannot provide these records, the relevant contract expense may not qualify as eligible expenditure.

#### A.5 Other eligible expenditure (all projects)

Other eligible expenditure for the project may include:

- financial auditing of project expenditure
- costs you incur in order to obtain planning, environmental or other regulatory approvals during the project period. However, associated fees paid to the Commonwealth, state, territory and local governments are not eligible.
- costs associated with the delivery of training and education programs, such as facilities hire, planning and facilitation, design and publication of materials, community/public messaging such as radio, print media and billboard space, and reasonable travel costs (calculated on the basis of your organisations' travel policy)
- project management costs including remuneration of additional technical, professional and/or administrative staff for time directly related to managing the delivery of the project (does not include ordinary wages, executive duties or overhead charges) (non-infrastructure projects only)
- purchase and installation of fixed plant and equipment, such as generators (applicable projects only)
- agreed program signage if applicable as outlined in 10.8 of these guidelines.

Other specific expenditures may be eligible as determined by the Program Delegate in accordance with the CGRGs and Government practice.

Evidence can include but is not limited to supplier contracts, purchase orders, invoices and supplier confirmation of payments.

## Appendix B. Ineligible expenditure

This section provides guidance on what we consider ineligible expenditure.

The Program Delegate may impose limitations or exclude expenditure, or further include some ineligible expenditure listed in these guidelines in a grant agreement or otherwise by notice to you.

Examples of ineligible expenditure include:

- purchase of land or existing infrastructure, including the costs associated with sub-division of land
- repair or replacement of existing infrastructure where there is no demonstrated significant increase in benefit
- ongoing operating costs, including utilities
- payment of salaries for the applicant's existing employees. Exemptions may be sought, for example, in the case of remote locations. A request for exemption needs to be supported by evidence that demonstrates exceptional circumstances and that there are no alternative solutions to the use of existing staff
- project overhead items including office equipment, vehicles or the applicant's mobile capital equipment. Exemptions may be sought for the use of capital equipment such as trucks and earth moving equipment. A request for exemption needs to be supported by evidence that demonstrates exceptional circumstances and that there are no alternative solutions to the use of existing plant and equipment
- business case development and feasibility studies
- routine operational expenses, including communications, travel, marketing, accommodation, printing and stationery, postage, legal and accounting fees and bank charges
- writing the application and reporting on the grant
- making donations, gifts and sponsorships
- pre-construction activities, including architect services, design, surveying, planning, environmental or other regulatory approvals, that exceed 20 per cent of the total eligible project expenditure

Additional examples of ineligible expenditure specific to projects include:

- ICT equipment, including software or hardware that is not an integral part of the funded project.

This list is not exhaustive and applies only to the expenditure on the agreed project. Other costs may be ineligible where the Program Delegate determines they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes for the project or they are contrary to the objectives of the Program. You must ensure you have adequate funds to meet the costs of any ineligible expenditure associated with the project.

## Appendix C. Attachments to the application

You must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided within the form. You should only attach requested documents listed in the application form. We may not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

Applicant type	Document
<b>Mandatory Documents</b> (must be submitted for your application to be eligible)	
Not for profit organisations	<p>Evidence of your current not for profit status</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Current Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC) registration; or</li> <li>▪ Incorporated association certificate; or</li> <li>▪ Constitutional documents and/or Articles of Association that demonstrate the not for profit character of the organisation.</li> </ul>
For incorporated trustees applying on behalf of a trust	Trust documents showing the relationship of the incorporated trustee to the trust.
All applicants	<p>Where additional contributions are confirmed, evidence is required. This must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ be on the co-contributor's letterhead,</li> <li>▪ be signed and dated by an authorised person, and</li> <li>▪ set out the value and timing of contributions and any conditions attached.</li> </ul> <p>If additional contributions are not yet confirmed (i.e. sought), applicants must provide advice as to when confirmation is expected.</p>
All applicants	Project Budget
<b>Supporting Documents</b> (evidence to support claims made against the assessment criteria for assessment)	
All applicants	<p>Evidence supporting how the project will benefit the community. This could include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community Needs Assessment</li> <li>▪ Letters of support from community stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Economic modelling</li> <li>▪ Market research</li> </ul> <p>Audited financial statements or similar for the last two (2) years for projects with grant funding over \$100,000</p> <p>Risk management plans</p> <p>Infrastructure projects only:</p> <p>Business Plan and/or Feasibility Study</p> <p>Evidence of third-party leasing arrangements (if applicable)</p> <p>Designs and Cost estimates or contracted costs</p>

Applicant type	Document
Grants > \$1,000,000	<p>Project Management Plans, commensurate with stage of development of the project, which should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Scope</li> <li>▪ Proposed Implementation methodology</li> <li>▪ Timeframes</li> <li>▪ Budget/Cost Estimates</li> <li>▪ Details of Regulatory Approvals</li> <li>▪ Procurement Plan</li> </ul>