Thriving Suburbs Program

Forecast Funding Opportunities are subject to revision, withdrawal or cancellation. Information in forecasted opportunities is provided for planning purposes only and does not represent a commitment by the Australian Government.

This Forecast Funding Opportunity does **not** constitute approved program guidelines and does **not** provide confirmation that the program is formally open. Applications **cannot** be submitted at this time.

Once the Thriving Suburbs Program Guidelines are released, the Program Guidelines will be the primary document for applications. Applicants should read and understand the Program Guidelines before submitting an application.

Contents

1.   Thriving Suburbs Program processes

The Thriving Suburb Program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives

This funding opportunity is part of the above funding program which contributes to the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts' (DITRDCA) Outcome 3: *Strengthening the sustainability, capacity and diversity of Australia's regions, including northern Australia, including through facilitating local partnerships between all levels of government and local communities; through investment in infrastructure and measures that stimulate economic growth; and providingfunding financial assistance.*

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Forecast Funding Opportunity released

The Forecast Funding Opportunity is published on the DITRDCA website to provide potential applicants with program information to begin developing their projects.

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Program opens

The Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development announces the program open and Program Guidelines are published on the DITRDCA website.

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STAGE ONE: EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

You complete and submit an Expression of Interest (EOI)

You complete the EOI application form addressing all the eligibility and assessment criteria in order for your application to be considered.

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All funding applications are assessed

Your EOI is assessed against eligibility criteria.

All eligible EOIs are assessed against assessment criterion 1 – EOI to understand how your project aligns with the program objectives and how ready it is to proceed. This information is then provided to the multi-party Parliamentary panel (the panel). The panel assesses your application against assessment criterion 2 and 3 – EOI.

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Recommendations on applications to submit a full application are made

The panel recommends which projects will be invited to submit a Stage two full application. DITRDCA approves which recommended applications proceed.

All applicants are notified of the results of the EOI.

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STAGE TWO: FULL APPLICATION

Stage two of the program opens

Successful applicants from the EOI stage will be invited to apply for Stage two and submit a full application.

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You complete and submit a funding application

You complete the application form addressing all the eligibility and assessment criteria in order for your application to be considered.

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All funding applications are assessed
Your full applications are assessed against eligibility criteria and you are notified you if you are not eligible. Eligible applications are assessed against the assessment criteria including an overall consideration of value with money and compared to other eligible applications.

⬇

Recommended funding applications
DITRDCA provides recommendations to the decision maker based on both the merits of each application and the policy intent to ensure equity nationally and between different types of organisations.

⬇

Funding decisions are made
The decision maker decides which applications are successful.

⬇

You are notified of the outcome
You are advised of the outcome of your application. Unsuccessful applicants may not be advised until funding agreements have been executed with successful applicants.

⬇

You enter into a funding agreement
As a successful applicant, you will enter into a funding agreement. The funding agreement will be proportional to the risks involved.

⬇

Delivery of funding
You complete the funding activity as set out in your funding agreement.

⬇

Evaluation of the Thriving Suburbs Program
DITRDCA will evaluate the specific funding activity and Thriving Suburbs Program as a whole. The evaluation will be informed by information you provide and from other various sources.

1.1. Introduction

This Forecast Funding Opportunity contains information for the Thriving Suburbs Program (the program). The Australian Government has announced a total of $200 million over 2 years from 2024-25 to drive local economic prosperity by providing access to funding for capital works for infrastructure across urban, suburban and peri-urban communities in Australia.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the funding program/funding opportunity
- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how funding applications are considered and assessed
- how applicants are notified of the outcome of their project applications
- how successful project performance is monitored and evaluated
- the responsibilities and expectations in relation to the funding opportunity.

Key terms used in this Forecast Funding Opportunity are defined in the glossary at section 14.

This Forecast Funding Opportunity does not constitute approved program guidelines and should not be relied upon as the primary document for applications. Once the Thriving Suburbs Program Guidelines are released applicants should read and understand the program guidelines before submitting an application.

2. About the funding program

The Thriving Suburbs Program will run over 2 years from 2024-25 to 2025-26. The program was announced as part of the May 2023-24 Budget.

The program will deliver community and economic benefits by investing in community-focused infrastructure which revitalises and enhances amenity and liveability throughout urban, suburban and peri-urban communities in Australia (see eligible locations as defined in the mapping tool. The Government is committed to urban renewal and supporting population growth by delivering the infrastructure and housing required to create strong and vibrant communities.

The objectives of the program are:

- constructing or upgrading community infrastructure, for example, sporting or cultural facilities
- contributing to achieving productivity and liveability outcomes
- projects that are strategically aligned with government priorities.

The intended outcomes of the program are:

- delivery of community infrastructure which contributes to local or state place-based priorities
- provision of infrastructure which benefits the community by improving equity and supports diverse social inclusion
- to grow local economies and enhance amenity and liveability particularly in suburban and peri-urban areas (new and outer suburbs)
- to contribute to the achievement of broader Government priorities such as net zero emissions, gender equality and/or First Nations priorities
- delivery of funding across a broad geographic spread of urban, suburban and peri-urban areas in Australia
- delivering a diversity of project types and a balance of large and small projects

- supporting and encouraging projects from lesser-resourced applicants and low rate based councils (see Appendix C).

The program will be delivered through a two-stage selection process.

Applicants must first submit an Expression of Interest at Stage one and if successful, applicants will be invited to submit a full application at Stage two. For further details see Section 6.

Applicants can submit no more than two applications per ABN. Only the first two applications per ABN submitted in order of time and date will be accepted.

3.   Funding amount

3.1.   Funding available

The Australian Government has announced a total of $200 million over 2 years for the program.

- The minimum funding amount is $500,000.
- The maximum funding amount is $15 million.

You are required to contribute towards the project. Co-funding requirements are:

Co-funding group	Project Circumstance	Total Commonwealth Government funding towards eligible project costs
Group 1	Projects run by First Nations Community Controlled Organisations (as defined in Section 14 Glossary)	Up to 90 per cent of eligible project costs
Group 2	Projects run by 'low rate based' councils determined using the ratio of Financial Assistance Funding to Net Rate Income. These councils are listed in Appendix C.	Up to 70 per cent of eligible project costs
Group 3	All remaining projects.	Up to 50 per cent of eligible project costs

If your application is not found eligible under co-funding Group 1 or 2 (if chosen in the submission), your application will be considered for eligibility under Group 3.

You are responsible for the remaining eligible and ineligible project costs.

Contributions to your project must be cash. In-kind contributions are not allowable as eligible expenditure and will not be considered towards the total of the co-funding contribution.

Other funding can come from any source including state, territory and local government funds.

You cannot use funding from other Commonwealth funds to fund the balance of project expenditure not covered by a funding under the program.

4.   Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all eligibility criteria.

4.1.   Who is eligible to apply for funding?

To be eligible you must:

- be an incorporated not-for-profit organisation.

    A not-for-profit organisation must demonstrate not-for-profit status through one of the following:

- current Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) registration; or

- State or territory incorporated association status; or Constitutional documents and/or Articles of Association that demonstrate the not-for-profit character of the organisation.

or

- be a local government agency[1] or body

and

- have an Australian Business Number (ABN), or ORIC registration

- deliver the project in an eligible location

- confirm the project will be shovel ready at the time of sigining a funding agreement

- own the land/infrastructure being upgraded or built upon or have the landowner's permission to use the land/infrastructure.

If you are applying as a Trustee on behalf of a Trust[2], the Trustee must apply using an eligible entity type as listed above.

Joint applications are acceptable provided you have a lead organisation who is the main driver of the project and is eligible to apply. For further information on joint applications, refer to section 7.4.

4.2.   Additional eligibility requirements

We can only accept applications where you provide:

- evidence of a cash contribution from another source (for example state government), the source must provide you with formal documentation confirming the cash contribution so you can attach it to your application (see section 7.3)

- evidence to support the request for co-funding where the Commonwealth is funding up to 90 per cent e.g. provide Indigenous Corporation Number (ICN) or declaration that you are a Traditional Owner or that the organisation is at least 51 per cent owned or controlled by Indigenous persons or the Indigenous Enterprise has 50 per cent Indigenous ownership for applicants submitting under co-funding Group 1

- evidence to demonstrate eligibility of your entity type

- recent quotes or costings for major costs as part of your full application (if invited to apply)

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[1] Local Government is an entity established under state or territory local government legislation, for the purposes of governing local areas within state or territory. In the states, they are generally referred to as local councils. For the purposes of this program, unincorporated areas and the ACT Government are considered to be local government entities.

[2] Trusts are not legal entities in their own right – to be eligible, only the Trustee for the Trust can apply by providing the signed Trust Deed and any subsequent variations with the application form. Trustees must be an eligible entity type as stated in section 4.1. Both the Trust's and Trustee's details will be collected in the application form.

- evidence that you either own the land/infrastructure being built/upgraded upon, or that you have the landowner's permission to use the land/infrastructure.

We cannot waive the eligibility criteria under any circumstances.

4.3. Who is not eligible to apply for funding?

You are not eligible to apply if you 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'
- an employer of 100 or more employees that has not complied with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act (2012)*
- an individual
- a partnership
- a Regional Development Australia Committee
- an unincorporated association
- any organisation not included in section 4.1
- a trust (however, an incorporated trustee may apply on behalf of a trust)
- a Commonwealth, state or territory government body
- a non-corporate Commonwealth entity
- a non-corporate State or Territory Entity
- a non-corporate State or Territory Statutory Authority
- an international entity
- sole trader
- a for-profit organisation
- university, technical college, school, hospital or aged care
- in an ineligible location as detailed in section 5.2.

5. What the funding can be used for

5.1. Eligible funding activities

To be eligible your project must:

- be aimed at constructing new community infrastructure or expanding or upgrading existing infrastructure for wider community benefit
- not be standard capital works of other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies including, but not limited to, roads, housing and essential service provision
- not have commenced construction
- not have received Commonwealth funding to undertake the same funding activities
- have a minimum eligible expenditure of at least $555,556 (group 1), $714,286 (group 2) or $1,000,000 (group 3) depending on co-funding requirements outlines in section 3.1.

Eligible activities must directly relate to the project and must include at least one of the following:

- constructing new community infrastructure
- expanding or upgrading existing infrastructure for wider community benefit.

Examples of these activities include but are not limited to:

- community hubs and centres (such as youth centres or men's sheds)
- art galleries, libraries, museums, cultural or multipurpose facilities
- aquatic and/or sports centres
- revitalisation of town centres
- projects that contribute to building connected and sustainable communities both in new peri-urban, suburban and urban renewal areas to increase liveability and strengthen social inclusion.

All activities must be strategically aligned to local or state place-based priorities and benefit the wider community. This will need to be addressed through the assessment criteria.

We may also approve other activities.

5.2. Eligible locations

Your project must be delivered in an eligible location. All eligible locations must be inside the Greater Capital City Statistical Areas (GCCSAs) as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Use the mapping tool to determine eligibility of your project location.

5.2.1. Ineligible locations

Any location outside of the GCCSAs as defined by the ABS is considered an ineligible location.

5.3. Eligible expenditure

You can only spend the funding on eligible expenditure you have incurred on an agreed project as defined in your funding agreement.

- For guidance on eligible expenditure, refer to appendix A.
- For guidance on ineligible expenditure, refer to appendix B.

The guidance on eligible and ineligible expenditure may be updated from time to time. If your application is successful the version in place when you submitted your application applies to your project.

Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for funding. The program delegate (who is a manager within DITRDCA with responsibility for administering the program) makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be a direct cost of the project
- be incurred by you for required project audit activities.

You must incur the project expenditure between the execution of your funding agreement and end date for it to be eligible unless stated otherwise.

You must not commence your project until you have an executed funding agreement.

6. The assessment criteria

6.1. Stage one – Expression of interest

You must address all assessment criteria in your application.

The application form may ask questions that relate to the assessment criteria below. The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the project size, complexity and funding amount requested. You should provide evidence to support your answers. The application form displays character limits for each response.

Projects which are assessed as meeting all eligibility requirements will be considered by the multi-party Parliamentary panel. The panel will consider and score your application against how strongly it aligns with the local or state place-based priorities of your area using your responses against criterion 2.

6.2.   Assessment criterion 1 - EOI

To what extent is your project ready to proceed and how does it align to the program objectives (weighted)?

Please note that your project needs to be 'shovel ready' at the time of entering into a funding agreement. You should demonstrate this through identifying:

a. how advanced the project designs are (provide brief evidence to identify how far you have advanced your project designs. Please be aware the total of <u>all</u> attachments cannot exceed 20MB)

b. how far you have progressed the tender process (provide evidence to show how far you have advanced your project)

c. the extent to which your project fills an identified gap or need for the community infrastructure

d. the extent to which your project will contribute to achieving a wide range of community socio-economic outcomes.

6.3.   Assessment criterion 2 - EOI

How does your project align with local or state place-based priorities for the area?

You should demonstrate this through identifying:

a. which local or state place-based priorities are being addressed and how your project addresses these priorities by:

- referencing published strategy and/or policy documents

- clearly explaining the alignment to your project

- detailing how your project will support government priorities

- referencing identified priorities in your strategies and policies while using your own words to detail priority relevance to your project.

6.4.   Assessment criterion 3 – EOI

How does your project align with government priorities?

a. Which government priorities are being addressed?
b. How does your project align with the urban development priorities of the DITRDCA portfolio and an increase in community, cultural or sporting facilities?

Projects will be assessed by the panel who will recommend which projects will be invited to submit a full application.

If invited to submit a full application, you will be asked to provide more detailed responses and evidence to support your answers as outlined in section 7.3. Detailed evidence of co-funding and Development Assessment approval will be required at full application submission.

6.5.   Stage two – full application

You must address all assessment criteria in your application. We will assess your application against each criterion.

The application form may ask questions that relate to the assessment criteria below. The amount of detail and supporting evidence in your application should be relative to the project size, complexity and funding amount requested. You should provide evidence to support your answers. The application form displays character limits for each response.

Funding will only be awarded for applications that score at least 60 per cent against each assessment criteria.

6.6.   Assessment criterion 1 – full application

Contribution to economic opportunity and/or social and community inclusion.

Economic opportunities may include increases in economic activity, improvements in productivity, wider access to markets or fairer and more equitable economic outcomes. Social and community inclusion may cover improving community connections and providing opportunities for learning and knowledge creation.

You should demonstrate this through identifying:

a.   the extent to which your project meets the needs of the community

b.   the economic benefits your project will deliver for the community during and beyond the term of the funding

c.   the social benefits your project will deliver for the community during and beyond the term of the funding.

Examples of how your project could deliver social and economic benefits may include but is not limited to:

- increasing Indigenous economic participation, including Indigenous employment and supplier-use outcomes

- increasing access to community services and infrastructure

- supporting or protecting local heritage and culture

- increasing community volunteering

- the use of local suppliers and goods, especially those that employ the use of sustainable work practices/goods

- increasing the number or value of jobs, new businesses or the production of goods and services (this includes direct and indirect opportunities created through the project)

- meeting the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse socio-economic and cultural groups such as First Nations people.

6.7.   Assessment criterion 2 – full application

Alignment with broader Government strategic priorities.

You should demonstrate this through identifying:

a. the extent to which your proposal aligns with social, economic and environmental priorities including alignment with any local, state or federal plans or policies

b. the extent to which your proposal aligns with the urban development priorities of the DITRDCA portfolio and increases the availability of community, cultural or sporting facilities

c. the extent to which your proposal supports the provision of community infrastructure in areas of population growth

d. the extent to which your proposal contributes to broader Government priorities such as net zero emissions, gender equality and/or First Nations priorities

e. the extent to which your proposal contributes to the growth of local economies and enhances amenity and liveability, particularly in suburban and peri-urban areas (new and outer suburbs and areas on the fringe of major cities)

f. how your proposal has considered environmental impacts and any potential role of environmentally sustainable design, including nature-based solutions and circular economy principles

g. the extent of community support for the project, including outcomes from any consultation undertaken with the local community, such as First Nations groups and diverse socio-economic and cultural groups.

6.8.   Assessment criterion 3 – full application

Capacity, capability and resources to deliver and sustain the project.

You should demonstrate this through identifying:

a. your track record managing similar projects and access to personnel and /or partners with the right skills and experience

b. sound project planning to manage and monitor the project, which addresses scope, implementation methodology, timeframes, budget, community consultation and risk management

c. how you will operate and maintain the infrastructure and benefits of the project into the future

d. your readiness to commence the project, including access, noting the project needs to be 'shovel ready' at the time of entering into a funding agreement. You should describe the steps you have taken to get your project investment ready including:

   ▪ required regulatory and/or development approvals

   ▪ project design and costings

   ▪ authority from the land or infrastructure owner to undertake the project at the nominated site(s)

   ▪ funding contribution from all sources.

The evidence you provide to support this must include, but is not limited to:

▪ a clear business case for the proposal, including project plans, budget and relevant approvals, timelines and procurement processes

▪ a cost benefit analysis commensurate with the size and scale of the project

▪ a risk management plan, which identifies risks and mitigations.

7.   How to apply

This Forecast Funding Opportunity provides program information that will assist applicants to develop projects for an upcoming opportuniy. It does not constitute approved program guidelines and should not be relied upon as the primary document for applications. Applications cannot be submitted before the program opens.

Once the Thriving Suburbs Program Guidelines are released applicants should read and understand the program guidelines including:

- all eligibility and assessment criteria and application processes outlined in the program guidelines
- supporting documents

and

- prepare detailed evidence that supports the assessment criteria.

Only two applications per ABN are allowed. Only the first two applications per ABN submitted in order of time and date will be accepted.

Given the historical over subscription of community infrastructure programs and the funds available, if an entity has more than one ABN, the total number of full applications submitted per entity will be considered during the full application assessment process and when considering the final list of projects awarded funding.

It is therefore recommended you focus on submitting EOI applications only for those projects most strongly aligned with the program objectives and able to meet the eligibility criteria.

7.1.   Stage one - EOI

Once the program has opened, to apply you must:

- complete and submit the Stage one – Expression of Interest (EOI) application
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility and assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments.

7.2.   Stage two – full application

If you are invited to submit a full application, you must:

- complete and submit the Stage two – full application
- address all eligibility and assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments and information requested.

You are responsible for making sure your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the _Criminal Code Act 1995._ Your application may not progress if you are considered to have provided false or misleading information. If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should immediately call the contact for the program.

After submitting your application, you will be contacted for clarification if an error or any missing information is found, including evidence that supports your eligibility/merit. The acceptance of any additional information provided after the submission of your application is at the discretion of the program delegate. Additional information should not materially change your application at the time it was submitted and therefore may be refused if deemed to be purely supplementary.

7.3.   Attachments to the application

You must provide the following documents with your application:

7.3.1.   Stage one – EOI

- evidence to support a request for co-funding group, such as a letter of intent (if applicable)
- evidence you either own the land/infrastructure being built/upgraded upon, or you have the landowner's permission to use the land/infrastructure
- evidence of a cash contribution from any source (for example state government), the source must provide you with formal documentation confirming the cash contribution so you can attach it to your application
- project budget
- project plan
- evidence of alignment to local or state place-based priorities (as further detailed in secton 6.3)
- evidence the project is ready to commence including approved development applications, project designs and timelines, noting the project needs to be 'shovel ready' at the time of entering into a funding agreement.
- trust deed (where applicable).

7.3.2.   Stage two – full application

- a business case which must include the budget, project risk assessment plans and cost benefit analysis
- attach detailed evidence that supports assessment criteria responses as detailed in section 6 (where applicable)
- recent costings/quotes for major costs as part of your application
- accountant declaration (published online)
- evidence of funding strategy e.g. financial statements, loan agreements, cash flow documents
- a letter of support from each project partner (see 7.4).

You must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided within the form. You should only attach requested documents. The total of all attachments cannot exceed 20MB. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

7.4.   Joint (consortia) applications

We recognise some organisations may want to join together as a group to deliver a project. In these circumstances you must appoint a lead organisation. Only the lead organisation can submit the application form and enter into the funding agreement. The application must identify all other members of the proposed group and include a letter of support from each of the project partners. Each letter of support should include:

- details of the project partner
- an overview of how the project partner will work with the lead organisation and any other project partners in the group to successfully complete the project
- an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise the project partner will bring to the group
- the roles/responsibilities the project partner will undertake, and the resources it will contribute (if any)
- details of a nominated management level contact officer.

You must have a formal arrangement in place with all parties prior to execution of your funding agreement.

7.5.   Timing of funding opportunity processes

You can only submit an application between the published program opening and closing dates. We will only accept a late application where an applicant has experienced exceptional circumstances that prevent the submission of the application. Broadly, exceptional circumstances are events characterised by one or more of the following:

- reasonably unforeseeable
- beyond the applicant's control, such as technical difficulties with our website
- unable to be managed or resolved within the application period.

Exceptional circumstances will be considered on their merits and in accordance with probity principles.

If you are successful, you must commence your project as soon as a funding agreement is executed.

8.   The funding selection process

8.1.   Assessment of funding applications – Expression of Interest (Stage one)

Your EOI will be first reviewed against the eligibility criteria. Only eligible applications will proceed to the assessment stage.

If eligible, your response to assessment criterion 1 – EOI to understand how your project aligns with the program objectives and how ready it is to proceed will be analysed. This analysis will be provided to the multi-party Parliamentary panel (the panel).

The panel will assess your EOI based on how strongly your project aligns with the local or state place-based priorities for the area (assessment criterion 2 – EOI). The panel will recommend projects to be invited to apply. DITRDCA approves which EOIs will proceed to a full application.

If your EOI is successful you will be invited to Stage two to submit a full application. All applicants will be notified of the outcome of the EOI process.

8.2.   Assessment of funding applications – full application (Stage two)

Your application will be considered on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the criteria
- how it compares to other applications
- geographical spread
- whether it provides value with relevant money[3].

When assessing the extent to which the application represents value with relevant money, the follow will be considered:

- the overall objectives of the funding opportunity
- the evidence provided to demonstrate how your project contributes to meeting those objectives

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[3] See glossary for an explanation of 'value with money'.

- the relative value of the funding sought
- extent to which the geographic location of the application matches identified priorities
- extent to which the evidence in the application demonstrates that it will contribute to meeting the outcomes/objectives of the Thriving Suburbs Program funding opportunity
- risks, financial, fraud and other, that the applicant or project poses for the department
- risks that the applicant or project poses for the Commonwealth.

As part of the briefing to accompany the assessment pack provided to the decision-maker DITRDCA will provide advice on applications based on policy considerations and the total program funding available to ensure the equitable distribution of funding within eligible areas.

When making recommendations DITRDCA will consider the individual merits of a project and its benefits to the local community, as well as:

- alignment of projects to program objectives
- geographical spread of projects across urban, suburban and peri-urban communities
- scale of projects, project type and applicant type.

Applicants should note this could result in projects that are rated less meritorious being awarded over others. This review will be undertaken to balance small and large projects, geographic spread and different types of projects within the funding profile including ensuring appropriate outcomes for lesser-resourced applicants and low rate based councils (see Appendix C - Low rate based councils).

8.3. Who will approve funding?

DITRDCA approves which Stage one - EOIs will be invited to submit a Stage two - full application taking into account the recommendations of the panel.

The Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government (the decision maker) decides which projects to approve taking into account the results of the Stage two – full application merit assessment, DITRDCA's recommendations, and the availability of funds.

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

- the funding approval
- the funding to be awarded
- any conditions attached to the offer of funding.

The Minister will not approve funding if there are insufficient program funds available across relevant financial years for the program.

9. Notification of application outcomes

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing. If you are successful, you will be advised of any specific conditions attached to the funding.

9.1. Feedback on your application

If you are unsuccessful, you will have an opportunity to discuss the outcome of your application.

10. Glossary

Term	Definition
application form	The document issued by the program delegate that applicants use to apply for funding under the program.
assessment criteria	The specified principles or standards against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive funding opportunity, to determine application ranking.
completion date	The expected date that the funding activity must be completed and the funding spent by.
date of effect	The date on which a funding agreement is signed.
decision maker	Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.
DITRDCA	The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts and the Commonwealth policy entity for this funding program.
eligible activities	The activities undertaken by a project proponent in relation to a project that are eligible for funding support as set out in 5.1.
eligible application	An application or proposal for funding under the program that the program delegate has determined is eligible for assessment in accordance with this Forecast Funding Opportunity.
eligibility criteria	Refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for funding. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.
eligible expenditure	The expenditure incurred by a project proponent on a project and which is eligible for funding support as set out in Appendix A.
First Nations community controlled organisations	These organisations are an Indigenous Organisation or enterprise and have an Indigenous Corporation Number (ICN) or can declare that they are a Traditional Owner or that their organisation is at least 51 per cent owned or controlled by Indigenous persons or the Indigenous Enterprise has 50 per cent Indigenous ownership.
funding activity/activities	Refers to the project/tasks/services that the project proponent is required to undertake.
Funding agreement	A legally binding contract that sets out the relationship between the funding agency and a project proponent for the project funding and specifies the details of the funding.

Term	Definition
Forecast Funding Opportunity	A document published on the DITRDCA website to alert potential applicants of an upcoming funding opportunity.
funding opportunity	Refers to the specific funding round or process where Commonwealth funding is made available to potential applicants. Funding opportunities may be open or targeted and will reflect the relevant funding selection process.
funding program	A 'program' carries its natural meaning and is intended to cover a potentially wide range of related activities aimed at achieving government policy outcomes. A funding program is a group of one or more funding opportunities under a single DITRDCA Portfolio Budget Statement Program.
Minister	Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.
multi-party Parliamentary panel (the panel)	The multi-party Parliamentary panel established to assess and score eligible EOI's received in stage one of the application process against assessment criterion 2 – EOI. The panel will assess projects and make a recommendation to DITRDCA on who to invite to apply as part of Stage two of the application process.
Program Guidelines	Guidelines that the Minister gives to provide the framework for the administration of the program, as in force from time to time.
peri-urban	Areas beyond the metropolitan fringe, at the interface between city and country but within the economic and social catchment of a large metropolitan area. May also refer to areas considered on the urban periphery into which cities expand or which cities influence.
personal information	Has the same meaning as in the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) which is: Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable: a. whether the information or opinion is true or not; and b. whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.
program funding or program funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth for the program.
project	A project described in an application for funding under the program.
Sucessful / approved applicant	The individual/organisation which has been selected to receive funding for their project.

Term	Definition
selection criteria	Comprises of eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.
shovel ready	Where project planning is advanced enough that – with sufficient funding – construction can begin within a very short timeframe.
value with money	Value with money in this document refers to 'value with relevant money' which is a judgement based on the funding proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations. When administering a funding opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to: ▪ the quality of the project proposal and activities; ▪ fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives; ▪ that the absence of funding is likely to prevent the project proponent and government's outcomes being achieved; and ▪ the potential project proponent's relevant experience and performance history.

Appendix A. Guidance on Eligible Expenditure

This section provides guidance on the eligibility of expenditure. This guidance may be updated from time to time; check online that you are referring to the most current version before preparing your application.

The program delegate makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be incurred by you within the project period
- be a direct cost of the project
- be incurred by you to undertake required project audit activities (where applicable)
- meet the eligible expenditure guidelines.

A.2 Verifying eligible expenditure

If your application is successful, you may be asked to verify the project budget that you provided in your application when you negotiate your funding agreement. You may need to provide evidence such as quotes for major costs.

The funding 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 explain how the costs relate to the agreed project activities. At any time, you may be asked 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 will be required to provide an independent financial audit of all eligible expenditure from the project.

A.3 Materials for construction

Costs of acquiring materials for the construction of infrastructure are considered 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 website.

You must list material costs as a separate item within your project budget in the application form and in the expenditure table in your progress reports.

Any payments to you for any expenditure you have incurred will not be paid prior to the execution of your funding agreement.

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)
- photographs of the infrastructure on your premises.

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

- the costs of materials
- freight costs.

A.4   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.5   Contract expenditure

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.

This does 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.

Evidence will be required regarding 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. You may be required 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.6   External labour hire and external consulting expertise

Eligible external labour and external consulting expenditure for the funding covers the cost of contracting others on the core elements of the project related to construction. Where possible, you should engage local labour and services.

Eligible external labour hire and external consulting expenditure 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 (A.5 and A.6), are limited to 20 per cent of the total amount of eligible project expenditure claimed. These costs are only eligible if the activities occur during the project period as defined in your funding agreement.

A.7   Other eligible expenditure

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.

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

Evidence you need to supply can include but is not limited to supplier contracts, purchase orders, invoices and supplier confirmation of payment.

Appendix B.   Guidence on Ineligible Expenditure

This section provides guidance on what we consider ineligible expenditure. We may update this guidance from time to time; check online that you are referring to the most current version before preparing your application.

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

Examples of ineligible expenditure include:

- purchase of land or existing infrastructure and essential services, including the costs associated with sub-division of land
- repair or replacement of existing infrastructure where there is no demonstrated significant increase in benefit
- costs associated with existing staff of your organisation including wages or 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
- retrospective costs
- 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 to develop or deliver ongoing training or educational courses
- funding to undertake studies, including feasibility studies or investigations
- 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
- funding for activities which are the standard capital works of other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies, including, but not limited to, roads, housing and essential service provision
- purchase and installation of manufacturing equipment
- subsidy of general ongoing administration of an organisation such as electricity, phone and rent
- payment of salaries for the applicant's employees
- project overhead items including office equipment, vehicles or mobile capital equipment. Examples include trucks and earthmoving equipment and the applicant's internal plant operating costs
- costs incurred in the preparation of a funding application or related documentation for example business case development and feasibility studies
- costs related to registered training organisation training activities
- routine operational expenses, including communications, accommodation, printing and stationery, postage, legal and accounting fees and bank charges
- making donations, gifts and sponsorships

- pre-construction activities, including architect services, design, surveying, planning, environmental or other regulatory approvals (A.5 and A.6), that exceed 20 per cent of the total eligible project expenditure
- costs incurred prior to the execution of a funding agreement
- fees paid to the Commonwealth, state, territory and local governments to obtain planning, environmental or other regulatory approvals

Additional examples of ineligible expenditure specific to investment ready projects include:

- purchase of unfixed furniture, such as desks and fridges
- ICT equipment, including software or hardware that is not an integral part of the funded infrastructure project
- office computing facilities.

This list is not exhaustive and applies only to the expenditure of the funds. 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, that they are contrary to the objective of the program.

You must ensure you have adequate funds to meet the costs of any ineligible expenditure associated with the project.

Appendix C.   Low rate based councils

State/Territory	Local Government Area (2020)
NSW	Blacktown
	Blue Mountains
	Campbelltown
	Central Coast
	Fairfield
	Hawkesbury
	Wollondilly
QLD	Lockyer Valley
	Somerset
SA	Adelaide Plains
	Gawler
	Playford
	Salisbury
TAS	Brighton
	Derwent Valley
	Kingborough
	Sorrell
VIC	Cardinia
	Macedon Ranges
	Melton
	Moorabool
	Whittlesea
	Yarra Ranges
WA	Murray
	Mundaring
	Serpentine-Jarrahdale
NT	Litchfield