



Frequently Asked Questions

STRONGER COMMUNITIES PROGRAMME

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1. ELIGIBILITY

1.1 How are local government bodies defined?

Local government bodies are defined in Attachment A of the SCP Guidelines.

1.2 How is a not-for-profit organisation defined?

- A not-for-profit organisation is an organisation that is not operating for the profit or gain of its individual members, whether these gains would have been direct or indirect. This applies both while the organisation is operating and when it winds up.
- The Department would accept that an organisation is a not-for-profit where its constituent or governing documents contain acceptable clauses demonstrating the not-for-profit character of the organisation and which prevent it from distributing profits or assets for the benefit of particular people.
- For the purposes of SCP, not-for-profit organisations must also be a legal entity with a current Australian Business Number (ABN).
- Examples of incorporated legal structures for not-for-profits include incorporated associations, companies limited by guarantee, non-trading co-operatives, and Indigenous corporations.

1.3 Can SCP be used to re-furbish a leased building?

- Yes, funding can be used to re-furbish a leased building, provided the project does not involve the development of a private or commercial venture (see Section 4.1.2. of the Guidelines for further information).

1.4 I am not sure if my project fits under the SCP Guidelines. If I email a description of the project to the SCP email address, can they offer me advice on this matter?

- Yes, the Department can provide advice to proponents about the eligibility of particular projects, or types of projects, or their organisation.
- Please refer to the eligibility criteria requirements located at Section 4 of the Guidelines before contacting the Department for advice.

1.5 Can I apply for a project that has already commenced or is scheduled to commence?

- Yes, but funding will not be provided for expenditure incurred prior to the announcement that the project has been successful in its application for funding. Financial commitments entered into before announcement and before a grant agreement has been executed with the Department are done so at the risk of the Grant Recipient.
- Funding may be available for a project which is underway but must be for a new stage of the project. For example, a public library may be already under construction and SCP funding may be provided for a project to fit-out a proposed public computer lab within the library.

1.6 Must a Member of Parliament select projects that are located within their own electorate for funding under the Stronger Communities Programme?

- Yes, Members of Parliament must select from projects within their own electorate.
- Projects may cross electorate boundaries. Where this occurs, Members of Parliament will need to agree funding arrangements between electorates. In these circumstances, every grant must relate to separate capital works and applicants must demonstrate matched contributions, in cash or in kind.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 What is the Department's role in the assessment of applications?

- The Department will consider all applications against the Guidelines to confirm eligibility and to determine whether the project would be a proper use of grant funding.
- Departmental assessors will make recommendations on projects to be funded to a senior officer within the Infrastructure Investment Division of the Department for final approval.

2.2 Will the Department contact me with questions relating to my application?

- The Department may contact you, or the relevant Member of Parliament, about the application to seek further information or clarification during the assessment process.

2.3 Who will provide advice on SCP during the application process?

- Questions can be sent to the scp@infrastructure.gov.au mailbox. Questions should be clear and concise, and identify the part of the process you are seeking advice on. Answers will be provided in writing.
- Key questions will be added to the Frequently Asked Questions document from time to time to ensure that consistent advice is provided to applicants.

2.4 What are the SCP community consultation arrangements within my electorate?

- Members of Parliament must establish a community consultation committee, or engage an existing group to identify priority projects. The form of those arrangements within individual electorates is determined by each Member of Parliament.

3. HOW TO APPLY

3.1 How do I submit an application?

- SCP is only open to invited applicants.
- Following community consultation, Members of Parliament will invite selected applicants to apply for funding and provide these applicants with a link to the online application form on the Department's Grants management System (GMS) Portal.

- Applications must be submitted via an application form on the Department's GMS Portal.
- The User Guide to the GMS Portal will be available in mid-August on the Department's website to assist applicants to submit their application.

3.2 What happens if there are technical difficulties when I try to submit my application?

- If you experience technical difficulties when trying to submit your application it is important that you seek assistance from the Department. Details of an Infoline and a mailbox from which you will be able to seek assistance will be available when the GMS is released.
- The Department's Infoline and mailbox will be staffed by IT experts, who will be able to respond to queries relating to application lodgment.

3.3 Can the Department provide some examples of the types of projects that may be suitable for funding?

Below are a range of projects that are intended as a guide only and should not be considered indicative of projects which will be supported:

- construction and fit-out of men's sheds;
- fit-out of community centres, health centres including kitchen upgrades and equipment purchases such as computers, TVs and furniture and fittings;
- bike paths;
- sporting facilities upgrades including new scoreboards, spectator seating, new turf, fit-out of changes rooms, new canteen, new lights, upgrade drainage and water systems, gymnasiums;
- streetscapes;
- skate parks; or
- purchase of equipment for local SES.

Applicants should prepare their application and provide information which best represents their own project and the benefits it will deliver.

3.4 How do I withdraw my application?

- If you want to withdraw your application please contact your Member of Parliament and notify the Department via the SCP mailbox (scp@infrastructure.gov.au).

3.5 Are there any mandatory documents that I need to provide?

- Yes
- **All applicants** are to provide the following documents:
 - Quotes for the total project cost; and

- Written confirmation of all cash and in-kind partner funding. If partner funding is conditional on the provision of the funding grant, applicants must provide a letter of intent from the organisation providing funding.
- In addition **not-for-profit organisations** are to provide the following documents unless they are registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission*:
 - Financial Information on your organisation in one of the following forms:
 - Audited Financial Statements or similar for two of the three most recent consecutive years signed by an independent auditor; or
 - Copies of financial information that Incorporated bodies are required to provide under relevant state legislation;
 - Evidence of legal status:
 - Incorporated bodies must include articles of incorporation or similar document
- In addition to the above mandatory documents, users may upload supporting documents with the application.
- Each supporting document must not exceed 15 megabytes in size and must not **exceed 45 characters in length for the file name.**

* For those organisations registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission the Department will contact them direct for your organisation's financial information.

3.6 What if I do not provide all the mandatory documents?

- Failure to provide requested documents will render an application ineligible.

3.7 Can I provide extra information to the Department once my application has been submitted to the Member of Parliament or the Department?

- Yes, further information can be submitted if required via the SCP mailbox (scp@infrastructure.gov.au).

4. PARTNERSHIP FUNDING

4.1 What in-kind contributions can be included as part of my project funding?

In-kind refers to goods, services and labour that have a monetary value, but do not involve a payment, as well as other transactions not involving money.

For the purposes of the Stronger Communities Programme, in-kind contributions have to be a contribution to the delivery of the capital project e.g. if an applicant is building a bike path then an in-kind contribution could be the applicant's employees constructing the bike path.

Other examples of in-kind contributions for your project can include:

- any person undertaking work on the capital project, including your staff or volunteers;

- professional services specifically related to your project, including legal, architectural, engineering and accounting services;
- other project and related services, including site preparation, fabricating and sub-contractors;
- new or used furnishings, landscape or construction materials (such as appliances, furniture, trees, plants, wood, plumbing, hardware etc.), donated by a business or an individual for the project;
- the use of machinery and heavy equipment.

4.2 How can I calculate the value of in-kind contributions to the project?

To determine the value of **goods** or **services** provided as in-kind contributions towards a project, it is preferable that applicants obtain a written statement of the market value of those items from the in-kind contributor. An example of this could be a quotation from a carpenter that shows what it would normally cost to provide fit-out services and how long that work will normally take. If this is not possible, then applicants should demonstrate how they determined the in-kind value of a particular item provided. Examples of this could be:

- *“Checked prices of relevant construction materials at the local hardware store and calculated the total value to be \$2,364.”, or*
- *“Contacted a local carpenter who indicated that the work would take 23 hours and his normal hourly rate for this service is \$52 per hour, so the total value of the carpenter’s work is \$1,196.”*

To determine the value of **volunteer labour** provided as in-kind contributions towards a project, Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates the replacement cost of volunteers on the basis of Average Weekly Wage data is currently estimated at \$31.05 per hour. Applicants may use this figure in their application in order to calculate the in-kind contribution value of volunteer labour for the project. An example of this could be:

- *“Four parents are volunteering their time to do the landscaping work on the outside of the building. It is estimated it is going to take these four people two full days’ work. This calculation is 4 people x 2 days x 7 hours work per day x \$31.05 per hour per person, which calculates to a total value of \$1,738.80.”*

If an applicant determines that their volunteer rates are higher than the \$31.05 indicated then they must provide sound logic behind that rationale and exactly how they determined the value.

To determine the value of **land** or **property** to be provided as an in-kind contribution towards a project it is preferable if applicants provide a written valuation of the current market value of the particular land or property. If this is not possible, then applicants should demonstrate how they determined the in-kind value of the land or property. An example of this could be:

- *“The adjacent block of land to where the project is located is a very similar size and nature. In 2013 this block was sold for \$15,000. We have valued the land to be used for this project as \$15,000, based on that sale price.”*

4.3 In terms of partner funding, what does ‘cash’ include?

For the purpose of determining partner funding, cash includes money in hand, petty cash, bank account balance, customer cheques, and marketable securities. It may also include the un-utilised portion of an overdraft facility, line of credit, or a loan from a financial institution.

5. ASSESSMENT

5.1 How will applications be assessed?

The Department will undertake an appraisal of all applications. The appraisal will examine whether:

- the Applicant is a community based not-for-profit organisation in its own right that is not owned by a state or territory government, or is a local governing body, as defined at Attachment A of the Guidelines;
- the Applicant is a legal entity with a current Australian Business Number (ABN);
- the project is for capital purchases/activities and contributes to an improvement in local community participation and cohesion and contributes to the vibrancy and viability of the community;
- funding sought from the SCP is at least \$5,000 and no more than \$20,000;
- the Applicant's cash or in-kind contribution match the SCP grant on at least a dollar for dollar basis; and
- all partner funding is confirmed.

6. FUNDING DECISION

6.1 When will I be advised about the outcome of my application?

- Applications from Electorates will be assessed in the order that they are submitted by the Members of Parliament. Funding decisions will be provided on a continuous basis throughout the duration of the Programme.
- It is anticipated that the assessment process for projects with payments in the 2015/16 financial year will be completed as soon as possible after receipt of all applications from each of the 150 Members of Parliament. The timeframe for finalisation of the assessment will depend on the quality and quantity of the applications.
- Written advice on the outcome of each application will be provided to the Members of Parliament who will then be able to notify successful and unsuccessful applicants.
- The Department will subsequently write to successful applicants. Applicants will be informed at this time of any particular conditions that may apply to their grant funding offer.
- Projects approved for funding will be listed on the Department's website at <http://www.infrastructure.gov.au>.

7. CONDITIONS OF FUNDING

7.1 Am I required to report on project progress to the Government?

- No, successful applicants will not be required to provide progress reports.
- Applicants will be required to keep records of their project for two years and may be required to provide them to the Department for evaluation upon request (see Section 6 of the Guidelines).

8. PAYMENT OF FUNDING

8.1 Will GST adjustments be factored into my grant funding?

Different arrangements for GST apply depending on the type of grant recipient:

- applicants that are GST registered will receive the GST exclusive amount; and
- applicants that are not GST registered will receive the GST inclusive amount.

8.2 Do I need to pay GST on the SCP funding?

- All applicants are advised to seek advice on GST from a qualified professional or the Australian Taxation Office at www.ato.gov.au.

9. FURTHER INFORMATION

9.1 Where do I get more information about the SCP?

For further information on the SCP refer to the SCP Guidelines in the first instance then this Frequently Asked Questions document. If you are still unclear send your question to scp@infrastructure.gov.au.