



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Infrastructure  
and Regional Development**



# STRONGER COMMUNITIES PROGRAMME

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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## CONTENTS

<b>1. ELIGIBILITY</b> .....	<b>5</b>
1.1 How are local government bodies defined? .....	5
1.2 How is a not-for-profit organisation defined? .....	5
1.3 Are Parent and Citizens Associations (P&Cs) eligible to apply for funding under the SCP?5	
1.4 What percentage of funding from the Australian Government would cause an organisation to be deemed ineligible under the SCP Programme Guidelines? .....	5
1.5 Are unincorporated entities eligible to apply for funding under the SCP?.....	5
1.6 What types of projects would be considered to support the development of commercial ventures and therefore ineligible under Section 4.1.2 of the SCP Guidelines? .....	6
1.7 Can SCP be used to refurbish a leased building? .....	6
1.8 Can I apply for a project that has already commenced or is scheduled to commence? .....	6
1.9 Can I start a project that has been submitted to the Department by my Member of Parliament? .....	6
1.10 What effect will the proposed changes to electorate boundary have on Round 2? .....	6
<b>2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b> .....	<b>7</b>
2.1 What is the Department's role in the assessment of applications? .....	7
2.2 Will the Department contact me with questions relating to my application? .....	7
2.3 Who will provide advice on SCP during the application process? .....	7
2.4 What are the SCP community consultation arrangements within my electorate?.....	7
<b>3. HOW TO APPLY</b> .....	<b>7</b>
3.1 How do I submit an application?.....	7
3.2 What happens if there are technical difficulties when I try to submit my application?.....	8
3.3 Can the Department provide some examples of the types of projects that may be suitable for funding? .....	8
3.4 How do I withdraw my application? .....	8
3.5 Are there any mandatory documents that I need to provide?.....	8
3.6 How many quotes do I need to provide? .....	9
3.7 If I have a project involving construction, do I need to provide evidence of relevant approvals or licences?.....	9

3.8	How do I calculate the costs for my projects?.....	9
3.9	Can I provide extra information to the Department once my application has been submitted to the Member of Parliament or the Department?.....	9
<b>4.</b>	<b>PARTNERSHIP FUNDING .....</b>	<b>10</b>
4.1	What in-kind contributions can be included as part of my project funding? .....	10
4.2	How can I calculate the value of in-kind contributions to the project? .....	10
<b>5.</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT .....</b>	<b>11</b>
5.1	How will applications be assessed? .....	11
<b>6.</b>	<b>FUNDING DECISION .....</b>	<b>11</b>
6.1	When will I be advised about the outcome of my application? .....	11
<b>7.</b>	<b>CONDITIONS OF FUNDING .....</b>	<b>12</b>
7.1	Am I required to report on project progress to the Government? .....	12
<b>8.</b>	<b>PAYMENT OF FUNDING .....</b>	<b>12</b>
8.1	What will I need to provide the Department in order to receive my SCP grant funding? ..	12
8.2	Do I need to pay GST on the SCP funding? .....	12
<b>9.</b>	<b>FURTHER INFORMATION.....</b>	<b>12</b>
9.1	Where do I get more information about the SCP? .....	12

# 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 Are Parent and Citizens Associations (P&Cs) eligible to apply for funding under the SCP?

- Generally P&Cs are eligible applicants. However, the use of SCP funds for projects that would only benefit schools would be unlikely to be deemed eligible expenditure under the Programme Guidelines.
- Projects sponsored by P&Cs may be eligible for funding if the project will benefit the broader community. Some examples might include:
  - Upgrade of a hall or sporting facility used by the local community that is on school grounds; or
  - Purchase of assets that will be used by the broader community, such as a bus or BBQ.

## 1.4 What percentage of funding from the Australian Government would cause an organisation to be deemed ineligible under the SCP Programme Guidelines?

- If an applicant organisation receives 51% or more funding from other Australian Government programmes or initiatives, it is ineligible to apply for SCP funding.

## 1.5 Are unincorporated entities eligible to apply for funding under the SCP?

- Not-for-profit applicant organisations that are unincorporated are not legal entities and therefore ineligible to apply for funding. However, these organisations may have a parent body that is a legal entity that could apply on the local branch's behalf.

1.6 What types of projects would be considered to support the development of commercial ventures and therefore ineligible under Section 4.1.2 of the SCP Guidelines?

- Organisations that are considered to be commercial can include licensed clubs that operate on a full time basis, and large service delivery agencies that provide disability, aged care, health, indigenous and education services.

1.7 Can SCP be used to refurbish a leased building?

- Yes, funding can be used to refurbish a leased building with the support of the owner, 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).

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

- Yes. 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.
- Funding will not be provided for a project that was completed prior to the announcement that the project has been successful in its application for funding.

1.9 Can I start a project that has been submitted to the Department by my Member of Parliament?

- No. Projects commenced or completed are ineligible under Section 4.1.2 of the Guidelines.

1.10 What effect will the proposed changes to electorate boundary have on Round 2?

- As the revised boundary arrangements won't come into effect until the next election, Members of Parliament will consider projects within their existing boundaries.

## 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](mailto: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.
- Before you begin, ensure you are applying for the appropriate SCP funding round (either Round 1 or Round 2). If you are unsure please contact your local MP to confirm.
- The updated User Guide to the GMS Portal for Round 2 is available on the Department's [SCP webpage](#) 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.
- The GMS Helpdesk is available from 9am to 5pm (AEST):
  - Phone: 1800 026 222; or
  - Email [GMSHelpdesk@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:GMSHelpdesk@infrastructure.gov.au).
- The Department's Infoline and mailbox are staffed by IT experts, who are 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, 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.

### 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](mailto: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 including calculations of in-kind contributions; and
  - Written confirmation of all cash partner funding.
- In addition **not-for-profit organisations** are to provide the following documents:
  - Financial Information on your organisation\*:
    - The most recent Audited Financial Statements or similar; and

- 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 the Commission direct for your organisation's financial information.

### 3.6 How many quotes do I need to provide?

- Applicants are required to provide one quote for each cash expenditure item.

### 3.7 If I have a project involving construction, do I need to provide evidence of relevant approvals or licences?

- Yes, if relevant licences and approvals have been obtained at the time of submitting the application they should be uploaded at Q23 of the application form.
- Where an applicant has not been able to obtain relevant approvals or licences at the time of submitting an application, funding will not be provided until evidence of the relevant approvals or licences have been obtained and provided to the Department. This will be managed through the Grant Agreement negotiation process with the grant recipient.
- As the funding for 2015-16 does not roll over to 2016-17, applicants need to ensure that any approvals for Round One are received by 30 May 2016.

### 3.8 How do I calculate the costs for my projects?

Different arrangements apply depending on the GST status of the grant applicant:

- applicants that are GST registered need to provide project costs that are GST exclusive; and
- applicants that are not GST registered need to provide project costs that are GST inclusive.

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

- No. However, during the Department's assessment of the application, a project officer will contact applicants if they require additional information or clarification of the information provided. Any additional documents can be forwarded directly to the project officer.

## 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;
- items including 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.

Expenditure items that are ineligible under Part 4.1.2 of the SCP Guidelines cannot be included as in-kind contributions eg if a sporting group is upgrading the canteen, then the cost of volunteers running the canteen beyond the completion of the canteen is not an eligible expense.

### 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.”*

## 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.
- The assessment process for projects will be completed as soon as possible after receipt of 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 negotiate a Grant Agreement with 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 What will I need to provide the Department in order to receive my SCP grant funding?

Grant funding will be made in a single payment. Before payment can be made, grant recipients will be required to provide:

- bank details;
- the executed Grant Agreement;
- where applicable, evidence that any other conditions of funding imposed by the Department in the Grant Agreement have been met, eg development approvals, lease documents etc.

A copy of the Grant Agreement template is available on the [SCP webpage](#).

### 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](http://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](mailto:scp@infrastructure.gov.au).

