



Active Transport Fund

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated December 2024

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Application process

How do I submit my application?

All applications must be submitted through the department's [Infrastructure Management System \(IMS\) online portal](#).

Please contact IMSHelp@infrastructure.gov.au for details on how to register for the portal or if you have any issues submitting an application.

Applications should not be submitted via email to the department.

Can we request an extension for the application due date?

The application closing date of 13 January 2025 was a decision of the Australian Government, and as such we are not in a position to extend the application timeframe.

Will this funding be available again next year?

The Active Transport Fund has \$100 million in funding available from 2024-25 to 2028-29. If funding is not fully allocated, additional tranches may be announced in the future at the discretion of the Australian Government.

Is there a requirement to consult with the department before lodging an application?

No, there is no requirement for proponents to consult with the department prior to lodging an application. If a proponent has any questions about the program or application process they can contact the department by emailing ActiveTransportFund@infrastructure.gov.au.

Is there a word limit or desired character count for each question to be answered?

No. But you should consider the amount and type of information you wish to include as part of your application to support the assessment of your project.

What documents do I need to provide with my application?

Applications must include:

- A fully completed application form addressing all criteria required.
- Supporting evidence demonstrating how the project directly addresses a focus area.
- Mandatory evidence demonstrating that co-contribution funding has been secured for the project such as official letters and budget papers and any supporting evidence that will assist with the assessment of the application.

What type of supporting documentation can I submit with my application?

Focus area supporting evidence:

Applications should outline how project outcomes address the focus area and relevant target area. Supporting evidence demonstrating how the project directly addresses a focus area must be provided.

Examples of supporting evidence may include:

- Safety plans, road safety audits and infrastructure asset reports

- Existing Net Zero plans or strategies
- Analysis that shows the project will increase cyclist or pedestrian numbers, increase use of public transport or remove cars from roads
- Active Transport Strategies
- Urban Strategies to connect communities and increase liveability

Examples of supporting documentation or evidence is varied and can include a structural report of the asset, detailed risk assessment, preliminary design for construction, project plan, council plans identifying the project need, road safety audit or consultation summaries with impacted stakeholders.

Co-contribution evidence:

Evidence must be provided to demonstrate that co-contribution funding for the project has been secured prior to submitting an application. Examples of acceptable co-contribution evidence include official letters and budget papers.

Why do I need to provide evidence to support the application?

Providing evidence to support the application validates the responses, ensures the accuracy of the information provided and enables a thorough merit assessment to be made.

Why is it a requirement to have funding secured prior to submitting the application?

All projects approved under ATF require a co-contribution from the proponent and/or other source. Co-contribution funding must be secured prior to submitting the application to ensure that projects approved by the Minister are ready to commence according to timeframes set out in the application. This also avoids project delays caused by budget approval processes.

What will the department be looking for in an application?

Eligible ATF applications will be assessed against three criteria.

- Strategic Fit
- Project impact and benefits
- Project Deliverability

The department will consider each application on its merits based on how well you can demonstrate it meets the criteria, how it compares to other projects and whether it provides value of relevant money.

Can I submit more than one application under the ATF?

Yes, applicants can apply for multiple projects, using a separate application form for each project.

Each project must be whole and complete and not reliant upon other projects. However, applicants can indicate if a project is related to another project (for instance if two applications are submitted, which could use the one construction crew to build both projects if both are approved).

Artificial divisions of a larger project into smaller projects to fit under the Australian Government funding limit will be deemed ineligible.

We recommend that you submit separate applications for each project. You are welcome to submit multiple applications and each will be assessed individually on its merits. Potentially you could have more than one application approved for funding. However there has been a high level of interest in the program, so if you plan to submit more than one application, you may wish to consider putting forward a range of projects that cover the different focus areas.

What level of personnel is required to sign the conflict of interest and the declaration and authorisation in the application form?

Both the conflict of interest and the declaration and authorisation will need to be signed by an authorised person who is of executive level (e.g. Chief Executive Officer).

The conflict of interest related parts of the ATF application form also requires a witness. A colleague from your organisation will suffice as a witness.

Delivery partners

All projects under ATF must have one lead proponent responsible for the delivery and reporting of the project. These proponents can be a state or territory government or a Local Government Authority. The proponent determines who undertakes the work required for the project. For example, if an LGA was the proponent, it could partner with another organisation to deliver the works.

We can accept applications from state and territory and local government authorities that provide council services to 'unincorporated areas'. However unfortunately we cannot accept applications from private company authorities that provide these services. These arrangements are consistent with other subprograms within the Infrastructure Investment Program.

How do I know if the location of my project is considered regional?

The definition of regional is taken from the [Australian Statistical Geography Standard](#). Urban projects are those located in Major Cities of Australia and regional projects are those in any of the other remoteness categories (Inner Regional, Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote).

Eligible projects

Eligible projects must:

- Be for the upgrade of an existing or construction of a new bicycle or walking pathway
- Directly address at least one focus area, and be supported by evidence
- On a publicly owned road asset or corridor that is accessible to the public
- Be a whole and complete project (not reliant on other works)

Projects must have the primary purpose of 'construction' (as defined in section 4(2) of the NLT Act) of a road-based asset (which meets the definition of a 'road' as defined in section 4(1) Road of the NLT Act and the National Land Transport Regulations 2022). Construction can include both the upgrade and/or replacement of a road-based asset. However, maintenance or design only projects are ineligible under the program.

A pathway is a road-based asset as defined in section 4(1) Road of the NLT Act and the National Land Transport Regulations 2022. Pathways must be on a road asset or corridor, but may be a separated pathway within that corridor.

Section 2.2.4 of the guidelines states that projects must be a whole and complete project. The pathway must be a standalone project that is not reliant on the completion of other works or form a part of another project. Artificial divisions of a larger project into smaller projects would be unlikely to be eligible.

Examples of projects that are likely to be eligible and ineligible can be found in Section 2.3.2 of guidelines.

Definition of a road

The definition of a 'road' as defined in the [National Land Transport \(NLT\) Act](#) and [the NLT Regulations 2022](#)) is listed below.

Definition of a road according to the NLT Act:

road:

(a) subject to paragraph (b), includes any of the following associated with a road:

(i) traffic signs;

(ii) traffic control equipment;

(iii) street lighting equipment;

(iv) a bridge or tunnel, including a bridge or tunnel for the use of pedestrians;

(v) a path for the use of persons riding bicycles;

(va) a facility off the road used by heavy vehicles in connection with travel on the road (for example, a rest area or weigh station);

(vi) any other thing that is specified in the regulations for the purposes of this definition;

Definition of a road according to the NLT Regulations 2022:

Additional things included in the definition of *road*

For the purposes of the definition of ***road*** in subsection 4(1) of the Act, the following things are specified to the extent they are not otherwise a road:

(a) a path for the use of pedestrians;

(b) a path for the use of persons using any form of transport;

(c) a bus stop;

(d) a bus station or interchange;

(e) a facility for passengers to enter or exit road vehicles;

(f) a facility for the transfer of cargo or passengers from one road vehicle to another;

(g) a car park;

(h) a facility off the road used by road vehicles (for example, a rest area);

(i) amenities for the use of persons who travel on a road (for example, shelter, toilets, seating, waste receptacles, drinking-water facilities and eating facilities);

(j) a facility for the care or management of livestock travelling on a road;

(k) a facility for charging electric or hydrogen fuel cell road vehicles;

(l) technology relating to road transport.

Note: This section specifies things only to the extent they are not already a road within the meaning of the Act.

Definition of a pathway

To be eligible under the program, projects must be within a public road corridor or on a public road asset, as stated in section 2.2.3 of the guidelines.

A pathway is a road-based asset as defined in section 4(1) Road of the NLT Act and the National Land Transport Regulations 2022. Pathways must be on a publicly accessible road asset or corridor, or may be a separated pathway within that corridor.

A pathway for the purpose of this program is defined as:

A publicly owned road-based asset which is accessible to the public.

(a) a path for the use of pedestrians;

(b) a path for the use of persons using any form of transport

A pathway must be on a publicly owned road asset or corridor which is accessible to the public and not on privately owned roads or land.

Rail corridors

The program is unable to fund pathway projects along a rail corridor.

For the purpose of this program, a pathway is a road-based asset as defined in section 4(1) Road of the NLT Act and the National Land Transport Regulations 2022. A pathway is defined as:

A publicly owned road-based asset which is accessible to the public.

(a) a path for the use of pedestrians;

(b) a path for the use of persons using any form of transport

To be eligible under the program, projects must be within a public road corridor or on a public road asset, as stated in section 2.2.3 of the guidelines.

Walking trails through bush/parkland

The program is unable to fund projects for pathways that are bush walking trails etc in protected or urban areas, unless these trails are alongside a publicly owned road asset or road corridor. For example, we cannot fund walking and cycling paths through the bush, or parks or around lakes etc where there are not any roads. Projects must be wholly within a road corridor or road asset to be deemed eligible for funding.

Is a shared path project along a creek trail connecting with various roads be eligible?

It may be eligible. Applicants under the program must be for encouraging active transport and meet one of the focus areas.

If the project is to link pathways that are part of a wider pathway network, it may be eligible. But it would still need to meet the requirement of being part of a road corridor or road asset and be on public land.

Would a public open space corridor be an eligible site?

While and open space may be publicly accessible, to be eligible for this program, the project must be along a road or road corridor as well as being publicly accessible. The program is governed by the NLT Act and this sets out the requirement for the project to be a road asset.

Crossings

The crossing would need to link pathways that people have to access as part of a longer journey to get to or from school/home etc, and you would need to demonstrate that it would encourage active transport by providing the crossing. But if the project is for the purpose of putting a crossing in so people can access a bus stop or parking on the other side of the road, or just to facilitate people getting from one side of the road to another (without the connection to a longer pathway), then this would not be considered eligible.

For example, if you have a bike path that weaves through a suburb and you need to cross the road to continue on your journey on the bike path across the road, then the crossing is eligible because it's linking two pathways and creating a safe connection. Crossing design features such as streetlighting and traffic islands may be eligible for funding through the program.

However, if, for example, the crossing is in the middle of a main street to facilitate movement of people across the road and back only, for shopping trips or access to services on the other side of the road from where they parked their car then it is not eligible.

Funding

How much Australian Government funding can I seek under the Program?

The Australian Government will contribute up to a maximum of \$5 million under the ATF for each project.

For **projects submitted by state and territory governments**, the ATF will contribute up to 50% of the total project cost, regardless of project location, up to the cap of \$5 million per project, unless otherwise agreed by the Minister.

For **projects submitted by Local Government Authorities (LGAs)**, the Australian Government recognises that some LGAs, particularly those in regional areas, may be limited in their ability to provide a 50% co-contribution. Alternative funding co-contributions can be sought as part of the application.

Where an alternative co-contribution is sought, justification must be provided to demonstrate the need for an alternative arrangement.

Note that these percentages only apply to the ATF funding, not other Australian Government funding used as a co-contribution.

Is there a funding cap amount per applicant? i.e. is it \$5 million per project, or per applicant?

No, you are able to submit multiple projects, each up to the \$5m cap.

Other funding sources for LGAs

In regards to alternative co-funding arrangements, Section 2.3.1 of the program guidelines states that LGAs may seek alternative funding contributions as part of their application. LGAs who are unable to meet the 50% co-funding contribution may request a funding contribution from the Australian Government greater than 50%. Where this additional government funding is sought, justification must be provided by the LGA to demonstrate the need for this additional funding arrangement.

The justification would be very specific to your circumstances and could relate to a range of matters such as budget constraints, significant cost of specific work, benefit to the community etc. For instance, an applicant may seek a 70% contribution from the Australian Government on the basis that the work would be of significant value to the community but it cannot source the remaining funds due to commitments to other key projects. Evidence to support these claims would be required, such as infrastructure plans, budget information showing other commitments, community feedback on the need for the project, road safety data supporting the need for the project, and/or a letter from the LGA's CEO outlining the issue and the need.

Co-contributions

All projects require a funding co-contribution which may be sourced from LGAs, state and territory governments, other Australian Government programs and/or private funding sources. Applicants are required to list all co-funding sources being used to meet their project cost contribution in the application form. When an application is submitted all funding co-contributions must be secured and evidence of this supplied with the application. Co-contributions from other Australian Government programs must also comply with the rules and/or guidelines for that program.

Can I use other Australian Government program funding towards my co-contribution?

Yes, funding co-contributions for the ATF may be sourced from other Australian Government programs, such as Roads to Recovery or Financial Assistance Grants. If a project is eligible for more than one type of Australian Government funding, it can apply for all relevant funding, but must secure other funding before applying for the ATF.

The Australian Government will only fund activities for a project under the ATF once.

What is considered untied Australian Government funding?

Untied funding is money paid by the Australian Government to States, Territories and LGAs to spend according to local priorities. Proponents can use untied funding if the project meets the eligibility criteria for that funding.

Are procurement costs for approved ATF projects considered as eligible costs?

Tendering costs for approved projects are considered eligible costs under the ATF, for example procuring a contract to deliver the project or procuring materials used directly for this project only. However, ancillary procurement costs, such as the cost of a probity advisor or for procurement-related travel expenses, are considered ineligible costs.

Please note that proponents must keep financial records for each project and be able to accurately report on costs.

Future funding

The Active Transport Fund has \$100 million in funding available from 2024-25 to 2028-29. If funding is not fully allocated, additional tranches may be announced in the future at the discretion of the Australian Government.

Assessment process

How will my application be assessed?

The department will assess and score all eligible applications against the assessment criteria using the responses provided in the application form and the information, evidence and analysis provided to support each application.

Is there a certain percentage of projects that will get allocated to regional councils?

No. The ATF is application-based and merit-assessed, open to all state and territory governments and LGAs. This means those projects with the highest assessment scores will be recommended to the Minister for approval. The ATF does not allocate percentages of projects based on location.

Will applications not seeking alternate funding co-contributions be given higher favour?

No. The percentage of co-contributions is considered at the application's eligibility stage and does not form part of the assessment of the proposal. Only LGAs may seek alternate funding co-contributions.

Who approves applications for funding?

Upon completion of assessment of applications, the department will recommend top scoring projects to the Minister for approval, taking into account the program budget.

The Minister or their delegate will make the final decision on projects funded.

When will I know if my application has been successful?

Following the Minister's decision to approve projects, the department will contact all applicants to advise of the outcome of their application/s.

Will I be contacted by the department if any further information is required?

The department may contact applicants to clarify information provided in the application, however for probity reasons and to avoid bias, new or additional information will not be sought or considered after the assessment process has commenced.

My project was unsuccessful. Can I resubmit an application?

Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback on their applications. Should a future tranche be opened, applicants would need to reapply for funding for a project that was unsuccessful, as costs for projects can change significantly and other factors can shift over time.

Will there be a reserve list of applications?

No. A reserve list will not be kept as costs for projects can change significantly over time and confirmation of co-contributions can also change.

Successful applicants

When must approved projects be completed?

Construction only projects must be complete within 36 months, and design and construct projects within 48 months, of receiving the funding offer.

In the case of unforeseen factors such as adverse weather events, it may be possible to vary the timeframe for a project, up to 31 December 2028 subject to agreement by the department. Variations will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

All projects must be physically and financially completed by 30 June 2029.

Can I commence a project before the department advises that my project has been approved?

For design and construct projects, design may commence prior to approval of a project, however only design work undertaken after approval will be eligible for funding.

Commencing construction for any project prior to signed acceptance of the funding offer will result in the withdrawal of the funding offer or non-payment for costs incurred.

If my project becomes delayed due to factors outside my control, can the project completion date be extended?

The department recognises that unexpected events, such as adverse weather events, may affect delivery of a project. In these circumstances, proponents must advise the department of any risks and request a project variation of the timeframe within four weeks of the time the proponent is made aware of any impacts on the delivery of the approved project.

The variation request must also be submitted prior to the completion of the construction of the project to be considered. All variation requests are considered on a case-by-case basis by the department and must be approved prior to any change in work.

How will funding be provided to local government proponents?

Where projects are led by an LGA, payments will be made through the relevant state/territory government to the relevant LGA. The state/territory government may have additional requirements of the LGA before funding can be paid, such as the provision of an invoice.

Can funding be withdrawn or cancelled at any time of the project?

The department considers the term *withdrawal* to refer to a project that can no longer proceed and has had no Australian Government funding paid towards it. Conversely, the Department considers the term *cancellation* to refer to a project that can no longer proceed where Australian Government funding has been paid.

A proponent may request to withdraw a project using the department's Project Withdrawal Form prior to the awarding of a construction contract where:

- cost estimates have significantly exceeded previous estimates
- the parties are unable to agree on a timetable
- there have been significant delays to commencement or completion of the project, and/or
- there are significant changes required to the scope of a project.

In circumstances where funding has been paid towards a project, the Department will work with the proponent to understand the circumstances of the project and review the eligibility of the costs incurred on a case-by-case basis. This will include an assessment of milestone payments that have been made, with consideration given to whether reimbursement of Australian Government funding is required.

The maximum amount of Australian Government funding contribution for a cancelled project is the amount of the funds already paid or the percentage of the funding contribution already incurred, whichever is the lower amount.

The department may request the withdrawal or cancellation of a project under specific circumstances, and will contact the proponent to discuss this if required.

Does the requirement for public tender for all projects over \$100,000 dollars apply to local governments?

Proponents must procure all elements of the project through a competitive process, or seek a tender exemption from the Department's website. If a procurement does not exceed \$100,000, a tender exemption is not required.

Under the ATF, proponents must comply with the rules and guidelines in their state or territory for the expenditure of public money and the procurement of good and services.

Milestones and reporting

Can I change the funding payable in my milestone schedule?

Proponents may request a different milestone schedule for a project. These requests will be considered by the department on a case by case basis.

I have completed a milestone early, am I able to make a claim for payment before its due date?

If a milestone is met in advance of the due date, where the relevant milestone report and evidence has been provided to the department and it demonstrates that the milestone has been met, the department will seek to make the associated payment as part of the next payment process.

Will I still be required to report quarterly for projects that have not yet commenced?

Yes, quarterly reporting is required before the project has commenced to ensure the department is made aware of progress in planning and any changes to project timeframes or other aspects of the project as set out in the funding offer.

Can LGAs report directly to the department?

In the Federation Funding Agreement – Infrastructure there is a requirement for LGAs to report through state and territory governments. LGA proponents must report through their relevant State or Territory government, using the department's Reporting Form available at: [Active Transport Fund - Resources | Infrastructure Investment Program](#)

Do we have to report if the co-contribution funding is increased?

If there is material change to a project cost the proponent must inform the department as soon as practicable, including changes to the funding sources for the project, such as the granting of further funding from other sources or changes to the co-contributor.

What evidence do proponents need to submit for each milestone payment?

Mandatory evidence for milestones can be found under section 5.2 of the [Program Guidelines](#).