Australian Government

**Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts**

Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program

Frequently Asked Questions

December 2025

Purpose

This document provides additional supporting guidance and clarifications for state/territory governments and Local Government Authorities (LGAs), applying for funding and managing projects under the Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program (SLRIP) and Heavy Vehicle Rest Area (HVRA) initiative. Answers should be read in conjunction with the Program Guidelines.

The application process

How do I submit my application?

All applications must be submitted through the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts' (department) Reporting and Program Management (RPM) portal unless otherwise advised by the department.

For assistance with RPM, please contact RPMinfo@infrastructure.gov.au for more information or RPMSupport@infrastructure.gov.au for help and support on using RPM.

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

No, there is no requirement for you to consult with the department prior to lodging an application. If you have any questions about the application process you can contact the department via email at SLRIP-Applications@infrastructure.gov.au.

What documents do I need to provide with my application?

Applications must include a fully completed application form addressing all criteria required for either a SLRIP or HVRA initiative application, supporting evidence that will assist with the assessment of the application, and mandatory evidence demonstrating that the co-contribution funding has been secured for the project.

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

All projects approved under SLRIP or HVRA initiative 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 and to avoid project delays.

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

Any evidence that clearly supports the answers given/claims made in the application form will strengthen an application. More information can be found in the Supporting Evidence Guidance for SLRIP Applicants document on the SLRIP Resources webpage. Note that any claims made in the application form should be substantiated with evidence, but the number of attachments to an application is not an indicator of a stronger claim. You should not attach additional documents where they do not directly relate to, or support, your funding application.

What will the department be looking for in an application?

Eligible SLRIP applications will be assessed against the following criteria:
- strategic fit
  - the rationale for the project, why there is a strong case for action, how it will achieve the stated objectives, and how it meets the needs of the community
- project impact and benefits
  - demonstrated social, economic and environmental value of the project with evidence-based analysis. This includes direct project benefits as well as benefits during the construction of the project.
- project deliverability
  - demonstrated capability and capacity to deliver the project, including mitigating identified risk.

HVRA initiative applications will be assessed against the same three criteria, plus an additional one:
- improvement to the Heavy Vehicle Rest Area network across Australia
  - demonstrated improvements the project would provide including usability or capacity of the rest area network across Australia in a way that is fit for purpose and meets the needs of truck drivers for the specific location proposed.

Additional information on the elements assessed under each criterion is provided in Section 3.3 of the Program Guidelines.

The department will consider each application on its merits, based on how well it meets the criteria, how it compares to other applications and whether it provides value for money.

Can I submit more than one application under the SLRIP?

Yes, applicants can apply for multiple projects, submitting 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.

Funding

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

The Program will contribute up to a maximum of $5 million of funding for each project.

For **projects submitted by LGAs**, the Program will contribute up to 80% of the total project cost for projects located in regional and remote areas, and up to 50% of the total project cost for projects located in urban areas, up to the cap of $5 million per project.

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

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

The definition of regional and urban is taken from the Australian Statistical Geography Standard. You can check how your project will be considered by:

- navigating to this ABS map
- selecting "2021 Remoteness Area (RA)" boundaries
- entering the project's address or geocodes
- clicking on the project's location to see how it is categorised.

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).

Are the funding rules for HVRA initiative the same as the SLRIP?

Yes, projects funded under the HVRA initiative and the SLRIP have the same funding caps and co-contribution requirements. Applications for the HVRA initiative are assessed against 4 assessment criteria rather than 3. To apply for funding under the initiative, you must complete all tabs in the application form, including the HVRA ONLY tab.

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

Yes, funding co-contributions for the SLRIP and the HVRA initiative may be sourced from other Australian Government programs, such as Roads to Recovery. If a project is eligible for more than one type of Australian Government funding, it can apply for all relevant funding, and must secure other funding before applying for SLRIP or the HVRA initiative. The Australian Government will only fund activities for a project under the SLRIP and the HVRA initiative once.

What costs for approved SLRIP projects are considered eligible?

An overview of eligible and ineligible project costs can be found in the Program Guidelines. Once a project is approved, and if you require more information on specific expenditure items you can contact the SLRIP Operations team at SLRIP-Projects@infrastructure.gov.au.

Once a project is approved, proponents must keep financial records for each project and be able to accurately report on costs. Refer to Section 7 of the Program Guidelines for more information on financial requirements for approved projects.

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.

Assessment process

How will my application be assessed?

The department will assess 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.

When will applications for each tranche be assessed?

Applications are typically batched for assessment 3 times a year.

Who approves applications for funding?

Upon completion of assessment of a tranche of applications, the department will recommend meritorious projects to the relevant Minister for approval, taking into account the value for money considerations outlined in the guidelines and the available budget for each tranche.

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

When will I know if my application has been successful?

Following the Minister's decision to approve projects under each tranche, the department will contact all applicants, using the contact details provided in each application, 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 considered after the tranche the application has been submitted under has closed.

My project was unsuccessful. Can I resubmit an application?

Yes. Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback on their applications and will have the option to revise and re-submit their application/s under future tranches. If resubmitting, it is expected that applicants review their application and update dates, costs and other information as necessary. The application form can change from tranche to tranche and applicants must ensure they are using the latest form if resubmitting.

Will there be a reserve list of applications?

No. A reserve list will not be kept as costs for projects can change significantly and confirmation of co-contributions can also change. Applications will need to be revised and re-submitted to be considered under future tranches.

What are common reasons applications were unsuccessful in receiving funding?

The SLRIP typically receives a high volume of applications. Unsuccessful applications did not receive funding for a range of reasons including:

- Questions left blank or unanswered in the application form
- Insufficient evidence provided to support claims made in the application
- Insufficient detail regarding the issue the project is addressing, what the project entails, and why the proposal is the most appropriate response to address the issue/s
- Insufficient evidence demonstrating stakeholder engagement
- Insufficient information and evidence of the project's social, economic or environmental benefits

- Insufficient information and evidence to show that the project was well planned
- Project timelines did not align with the guidelines (e.g. project plans)
- Funding requested did not align with the Guidelines
- Insufficient evidence of secured co-contribution (e.g. letters from CEO or Finance Team, extracts from Council's budget papers which specifically name the project, or confirmation of other funding sources)
- Insufficient mitigations/detail in the risk assessment table.

Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to contact SLRIP-Applications@infrastructure.gov.au to seek feedback on their application/s.

Applicants planning to apply for funding in future tranches should familiarise themselves with the Guidelines and these FAQs which include guidance on the elements taken into account in the merit-based assessment process when selecting projects to recommend to the Minister for funding.

Commencement of successful projects

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

Yes, it applies to all projects under the Program, including local government led projects. 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.

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 the department accepting your funding offer may result in non-payment for those costs incurred, or withdrawal of the funding offer.

How do I contact the department, throughout delivery of my project?

The Operations team responsible for management of active projects throughout their lifespan can be contacted at SLRIP-Projects@infrastructure.gov.au.

When must approved project/s be completed?

Construction only projects must be complete within 24 months, and design and construct projects within 36 months, of receiving the funding offer.

Milestone Claims

Can I request a change to the standard milestone structure to better align with delivery of my project?

Proponents may request a different milestone schedule for a project by contacting SLRIP-Projects@infrastructure.gov.au. These requests will be considered by the department on a case-by-case basis.

Can I request a milestone claim be paid in a specific month, or does it need to align with a quarterly reporting period?

Yes, milestone claims can be paid in any given month except for June, and do not need to align with a quarterly reporting period.

How do I determine dates that I expect milestone claims to be paid for my project?

The indicated date should align with when a finalised milestone claim is expected to be submitted to the department (including all relevant forms and evidence). In practice, this means a proponent should indicate a date that is a month or two later than the date they anticipate the actual works to be achieved, to allow time to prepare a claim submission and have it assessed by the department.

How do I claim a milestone payment?

To claim a milestone, please submit the completed milestone claim form linked here through to SLRIP-Projects@infrastructure.gov.au. It needs to be submitted by the end of any given month, to be considered for payment in the following progress report.

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 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.

I don't think a milestone claim will be achieved as originally scheduled. What do I need to do?

You should endeavour to advise the department as soon as reasonably possible if they anticipate an indicated milestone date will not be met. If the milestone is proposed to be moved to a new date that is prior to the 'last possible date' of the final milestone in the signed Funding Offer, the milestone can be moved by sending an email requesting the change to SLRIP-Projects@infrastructure.gov.au. If the proposed date is later than this date, then a schedule variation is required to be submitted, in-line with the 'Variations' section of this FAQ.

How is a progress report submitted outside of a quarterly reporting period?

This report is submitted by state/territory governments in RPM on behalf of all projects managed in their respective jurisdictions.

The Progress Report only needs to be submitted if a state, territory, or council is claiming a milestone payment for a project. If no payments are being claimed, there is no requirement to submit the progress report outside of the standard quarterly reporting process.

The fuller project update required in quarterly reports is not required when seeking a milestone payment.

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

Mandatory evidence for milestone claims can be found under section 5.2 in the Guidelines. Where the mandatory evidence is not provided, or is insufficient, the milestone claim may be delayed until satisfactory evidence is provided.

Quarterly Reporting

Can LGAs report directly to the department?

The reporting process for LGAs varies between different state/territory jurisdictions. Please contact the SLRIP Operations team at SLRIP-Projects@infrastructure.gov.au to confirm the specific process for your organisation.

When are quarterly reports due?

Quarterly reporting is due in February, May, August, and November, on or before the 13th of the relevant reporting month. Please contact the SLRIP Operations team at SLRIP-Projects@infrastructure.gov.au to confirm the specific process for your organisation.

What information am I asked to provide on my project in a quarterly report?

An overview of the information required to be provided in a quarterly report can be found on the 'Quarterly Reporting Template' form. For information on any requirements specific to the state/territory jurisdiction the project is funded in, please contact the SLRIP Operations team at SLRIP-Projects@infrastructure.gov.au.

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 any changes to project timeframes or other aspects of the project as set out in the funding offer.

Will I still be required to report quarterly for projects that are physically completed?

Quarterly reporting is required until a project is both physically and financially complete. For example, a project may be physically completed but not have all project milestones paid and a Post Completion Report accepted by the department.

Will I still be required to report quarterly for projects that are physically and financially complete?

No, quarterly reporting is not required once a project is physically and financially complete.

However, evaluation of the outcomes of the Program may be undertaken from time to time and proponents may be required to provide additional information for evaluation. Where possible, the department will use data already available to the department.

Variations

Variations are a regular occurrence in project management. The department recognises this and has processes in place if a variation is required. It is encouraged that other options to deliver the project within scope, timeframe, or cost, are considered before submission of a project variation.

There are three types of variations for the general administration of projects, and these are –

- Scope – a change to the deliverables as outlined in the Funding Offer and Instrument
- Schedule – a change to the timelines for delivery of the project and
- Cost – changes to the co-contribution structure, or a request for additional Program funding.

All requests for a variation must be submitted to the department for consideration/approval using the form on our website. The form can be found on our program resources page SLRIP Resources webpage.

Some common questions around variations are below.

When do I need to submit a <u>scope variation</u> request?

A scope variation is required when the deliverables of the approved project change. If your project will differ from the description outlined in the Funding Offer, then you need to submit a scope change variation. Please note, occasionally this may also lead to a change to the project name, which can also be requested at the same time.

Scope variations are not required for minor changes. For example, the Proponent has decided to use a different material or piece of equipment in constructing the project, but this does not impact the overall project benefits and is not a significant component of the project.

It is recommended that work does not commence or continue on a project prior to being advised that the scope variation has been approved, as it may result in your unapproved scope not being funded.

If the scope change is so significant as to change the approved project entirely, a withdrawal may be necessary. This can be discussed on a case-by-case basis by contacting the department directly at SLRIP-Projects@infrastructure.gov.au.

When do I need to submit a <u>schedule variation</u> request?

The department recognises that there are many reasons that a project is delayed, such as adverse weather events, availability of workforce or materials, delays to approvals, unexpected construction issues, and more.

All Funding Offers include a 'last possible date' for each of the milestones and as long as the changes do not extend past the 'last possible date' for the provision of the Post Completion Report, then milestones are able to be moved by providing advice to the department via email.

If the milestone changes will result in the project being completed after this last date, then a schedule variation will be required.

Although a formal schedule variation may not be required, the department should be kept informed of any changes to commencement or completion dates in quarterly updates on projects.

When do I need to submit a <u>cost variation</u> request?

Changes to co-contributions that do not change the amount of Program funding or the split that the Program is providing can be advised via email. For example, if the proponent was providing $100,000 to the project and they have now sourced $50,000 from outside of the Program's funding, the department should be advised as soon as reasonably possible. A formal cost variation is not needed.

Section 6 of the Program Guidelines sets out requirements in relation to the Australian Government funding contributions to a project. Other than in exceptional circumstances, all costs over the original project budget are the responsibility of the proponent.

Where a project is over budget, any increase in Australian Government funding will be at the Minister or their delegate's discretion, and requests for additional funding must be sought through a formal project variation request.

Can the Program fund a higher proportional split of the total project cost than was originally approved, if requested?

The Program cannot fund a higher proportion for your project than is allowable under the Guidelines and as set out in the 'funding' section of this FAQ.

If you originally had less than the maximum proportion approved and are seeking for the Program to fund up to that proportion, this can be considered on a case-by-case basis. A cost variation request would need to be submitted for review.

What happens if a project cannot be delivered within cost, scope, or time?

All variation requests are considered on a case-by-case basis by the department and payments will not be facilitated by the department while there is an outstanding variation request. Any works that happen during that time is at risk of the proponent, if the variation request is not approved.

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 the case of unforeseen factors, it may be possible to vary the timeframe for a project to up to three years for a construction only project and up to four years for a design and construct project.

In these circumstances where projects are not deliverable within timeframes outlined in the program guidelines, proponents must advise the department and request a formal project variation. The variation request must be submitted as soon as the proponent is made aware of the issue and prior to the completion of the project, in order to be considered.

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

The department considers the term *withdrawal* to refer to a project which has had no Program funding paid towards it to date. Conversely, the department considers the term *cancellation* to refer to a project where Program funding has been paid.

A Proponent may request to withdraw or cancel a project using the department's Project Withdrawal Form (on the Program resources page) at any time. Some examples where a cancellation or withdrawal may be necessary include 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 Program funding is required.

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