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

Guidelines

Safer Local Roads Infrastructure Program

September 2026

1 Contents

1.1 Processes for the Program

Program established

The Program opens for applications through 2 funding rounds per year.

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Applicants complete and submit applications

Applicants complete and submit the application form, addressing all the eligibility and assessment criteria and providing relevant attachments.

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The department checks applications for eligibility

The department checks all applications against the eligibility criteria. Applicants that do not meet all eligibility requirements will not proceed to merit assessment.

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The department undertakes merit assessment

Eligible applications are assessed against the Program assessment criteria, including consideration of value with relevant money, and are compared against other applications.

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The department recommends projects for funding

The department recommends projects to the Minister (or their delegate) for approval.

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Ministerial decision on projects to fund

The Minister (or their delegate) selects projects and provides approval under the NLT Act.

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The department notifies applicants of the outcome

The department advises applicants of the outcome of their application/s. The department works with successful applicants to confirm the delivery arrangements for the project, including final scope, budget and milestones, and issues a funding offer for each approved project.

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Delivery of projects

The proponent undertakes the project activity and reports to the department on progress as set out in the funding offer and in line with these Guidelines. The department manages each project working with the proponent, monitoring project progress and making payments when milestones are met.

2. About the Guidelines

These Guidelines outline the eligibility criteria, application process and administrative requirements for the Safer Local Roads Infrastructure Program (the Program).

The Program is governed by and administered under the following (as in force or implemented from time-to-time):

- the *National Land Transport Act 2014* (Cth) (NLT Act)
- the *National Land Transport Regulations 2022* (NLT Regulations)
- the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations (FFR)
- the Federation Funding Agreement – Infrastructure (FFA) and Land Transport Infrastructure Projects Federation Funding Agreement Schedule (FFAS)
- these Guidelines.

The Program is a sub-program for the purposes of the FFAS. Projects under this Program are administered under the NLT Act, and payments for this Program are made to states and territories under the FFA and FFAS, including where the applicant is a Local Government Authority (LGA).

The Guidelines should be read subject to the NLT Act, and in conjunction with relevant sections of the FFR, FFA and FFAS. The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts (the department) administers the Program.

These Guidelines come into effect from 1 September 2026 and apply to all funding applications submitted thereafter.

Definitions of significant terms used within these Guidelines can be found in the Glossary.

Before applying for funding under this Program, applicants should read and understand these Guidelines, as well as the resources available on the department's website.

2.1 About the Program

The Program provides funding for projects addressing current and emerging priorities in road infrastructure needs, as part of the Australian Government's commitment, under the National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30, to improve road safety outcomes. It is an ongoing, application-based, merit-assessed, funding program, open to all state and territory governments and LGAs. Funding of $200 million will be available under the Program each year for the construction and upgrade of road infrastructure to deliver safer and more productive roads across Australia.

First established in July 2024, the Program consolidated the former Bridges Renewal Program (BRP) and Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program (HVSPP), along with the Heavy Vehicle Rest Area (HVRA) initiative. Projects approved under these programs will continue to be delivered in line with existing arrangements until their completion. Funding for the HVRA initiative remains allocated within the Program, under the heavy vehicle facilities project stream.

2.2 Program objectives

The Program has 4 objectives that are linked to road infrastructure priorities.

All applications under the Program **must** address the 'road safety' objective and may also address other Program objectives.

Program Objectives	
Road safety	To improve road safety across Australia for all road users through the improvement of road infrastructure.
Productivity	To improve productivity and efficiency outcomes through connecting and improving road networks. • Connecting regions, communities and major gateways, growing economies and communities. • Improving efficiency and competitiveness of supply chains, ensuring reliable links between producers and markets.
Road resilience	To improve the resilience of critical roads by upgrading existing road assets that are vulnerable to closure or reduced capacity, enhancing networks to achieve greater route diversity, as well as building to a higher standard where appropriate to create infrastructure designed to withstand and recover from natural disasters and impacts from higher mass road vehicles.
Sustainability	To contribute to decarbonisation goals by minimising or avoiding embodied, operational and/or enabled emissions. This can include: • use of low or zero emission building materials, including the use of recycled materials or other sustainably sourced materials • use of innovative design and construction methodologies which minimise environmental impact • use of local supply chains to minimise emissions in transporting materials to site • incorporation of carbon offsets.

2.3 Project streams

The Program funds projects under three program streams:

- Road construction and upgrades
- Bridge renewal
- Heavy vehicle facilities.

Examples of projects eligible under each stream are provided in section 3.2.2.

3. Eligibility criteria

This section outlines the eligibility criteria for applications under the Program. The department will only consider applications that satisfy all eligibility criteria.

3.1 Eligible applicants

Applications can only be submitted by a:

- state or territory government entity, or
- LGA.

Applications in partnership with other government and non-government entities must have a lead applicant from a state or territory government, or LGA. Applications cannot be submitted by, and will not be accepted from, any other entity.

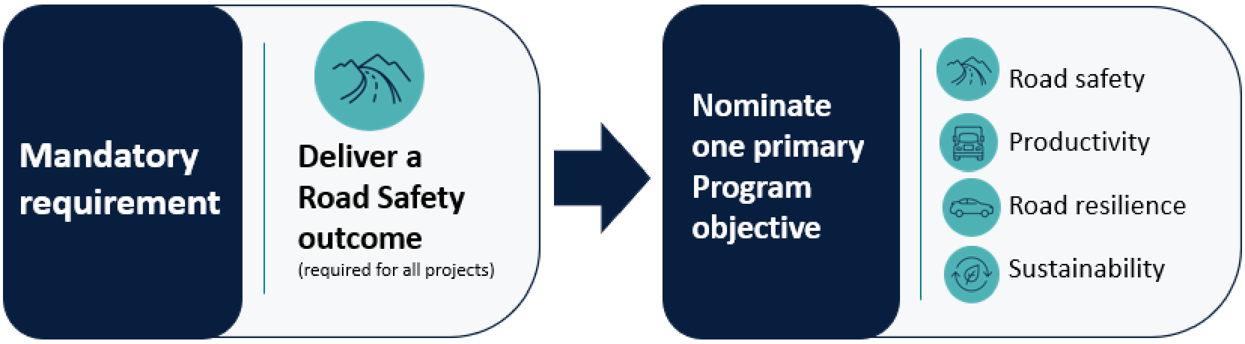
3.2 Eligible projects

To be eligible for assessment projects must meet all eligibility requirements set out below. Examples of eligible and ineligible projects are also provided below. This list is not exhaustive, and applicants should ensure their application clearly demonstrates that the project meets all eligibility requirements.

3.2.1 Deliver a road safety outcome

Projects must address the road safety objective to be eligible to receive funding under the Program. Applicants must clearly outline the road safety benefits their project will deliver in their application.

In addition, applicants must nominate the Program objective that best aligns with the primary purpose of the project. That is, every project must address the road safety objective, but the primary benefit of the project may be, for example, a productivity benefit, with associated road safety benefits.



3.2.2 Align with one of the project streams

Projects must fall within one of the project streams outlined below. These streams define the types of projects funded under the Program.

Project Stream	Example project types
Road construction and upgrades	• intersection upgrades and traffic calming measures • construction of new or upgraded public roads • mass action road safety treatments • light vehicle rest areas.
Bridge renewal	• construction of new bridges or culverts • replacement of ageing or structurally deficient bridges and culverts • upgrades to improve load capacity or vehicle access • associated works required to support bridge and culvert functions.
Heavy vehicle facilities	• formal heavy vehicle rest areas • informal heavy vehicle rest areas • heavy vehicle rest area signage • green light reflectors associated with heavy vehicle rest areas. Funding under this stream is provided through the Heavy Vehicle Rest Area initiative. Projects approved under the Heavy Vehicle Facilities stream must have the primary purpose of facilitating rest for drivers of heavy vehicles. Refer to Section 6.3.1

3.2.3 Be for construction on an existing or proposed public road

The Program funds construction only projects, and design and construction projects. Maintenance projects are ineligible.

Projects must be for the construction of new, or the upgrade of existing, road infrastructure. Projects must have the primary purpose of ‘construction’ (as defined in section 4(2) of the NLT Act) and meet the definition of a ‘road’ as defined in the NLT Act and the NLT Regulations.

Projects must be on a publicly owned road asset which is accessible to the public and not on private land.

3.2.4 Be a whole and complete project

Projects must be standalone, able to be delivered independently and not reliant on the completion of other works. Where a project forms part of a broader staged program of works, funding will only be considered where any preceding stages have been completed and are operational. Broader projects cannot be separated into smaller sections to be submitted as separate project applications in one funding tranche. Approval of one stage of a project does not imply or guarantee approval of a later stage of the project in a future funding tranche.

Examples of eligible projects:

- replacement and/or strengthening of bridges, culverts, and causeways
- realigning roads, shoulder sealing, adding rumble strips, safety barriers, and median changes
- upgrading and sealing an existing road to improve safety and access for road users
- construction of new roads to improve safety and productivity
- widening and sealing roads to accommodate heavy vehicle access
- upgrading roads to allow for efficient emergency response times and evacuation
- upgrading/raising roads to improve flood immunity
- crossing treatments such as pedestrian crossings and traffic signals
- sealing a road to reduce isolation of remote communities during the wet season
- installing audio tactile line marking and safety barriers along sections of a road, including as part of a mass action road safety treatment
- constructing new informal heavy vehicle rest areas or formal rest areas with functional elements such as toilets or shade areas
- upgrading heavy vehicle rest areas, including signage and green reflectors.

Examples of ineligible projects:

- projects that have already received funding under the Program
- design only projects
- projects that do not deliver a road safety outcome
- projects that have commenced construction, including where construction tenders have been awarded, prior to the application being submitted.
- projects that are on privately owned roads, or roads that are inaccessible to the public
- projects that do not provide a usable or operational connection independently of future stages
- projects that are for a commercial purpose, including those that operate on a user-pays basis or are intended to generate a profit
- projects that are for maintenance of existing roads
- rail bridges
- improvements to a livestock marshalling area not associated with a road
- standalone footpaths, bike paths and shared user path projects
- resealing a section of road where the same applicant has applied to reseal an adjoining section of road in the same tranche
- projects that have already been, or could be, fully funded from other sources.

4. Funding rules

The Program is designed to support delivery of new projects that cannot be undertaken without Australian Government funding support. The Program will not fund projects that have already commenced construction (including where construction tenders have been awarded) or where the applicant has already secured adequate funds to complete the project from other sources.

The Program will contribute up to a maximum of $5 million in Program funding for each eligible project. All projects require a funding co-contribution. In-kind contributions cannot be accepted.

The co-contributions required for a project depend on the applicant type and the location of the project, as set out in the following table. Projects seeking Program funding greater than the maximum percentage allowed will not progress to merit assessment.

For projects submitted by LGAs, the Program will contribute:
• up to 90% of the total project cost for projects located in remote areas
• up to 80% of the total project cost for projects located in regional areas
• up to 50% of the total project cost for projects located in urban areas
For projects submitted by state and territory governments, the Program will contribute:
• up to 50% of the total project cost for all projects, regardless of project location.

The definition of remote, regional and urban is taken from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Australian Statistical Geography Standard. Remote projects are those located in Remote and Very Remote areas, regional projects are those located in Inner Regional and Outer Regional areas, and urban projects are those located in Major Cities of Australia. Applicants can use the link to the ABS map tool to identify the project location classification.

Applicants are required to list all funding sources being used to meet their project cost co-contribution in the application form and may be asked to provide evidence of this. All applicants will be required to declare in their application that they have sufficient funding secured to meet their required co-contributions. If a project is approved, all costs over the original approved project budget are the responsibility of the proponent (see also section 7.1).

The Program funds projects under the NLT Act and administered under the FFA and FFAS. Accordingly, payments will only be made to, and through, state and territory governments. The department will not provide Program funding directly to LGAs. Where the applicant is an LGA, the relevant state or territory government will be responsible for providing the funding to the LGA.

Projects should not commence construction prior to the department approving the funding offer. Any costs incurred by a proponent prior to the approval of the funding offer are at the proponent's own risk.

4.1 Eligible and ineligible expenditure

It is a requirement of the NLT Act that funding for an approved project must be wholly expended on approved purposes in relation to the funded project.

The department may ask for the verification of project costs that were provided in the application, and evidence such as quotes may need to be provided. The Program delegate (a senior executive within the department, responsible for administering the Program) makes the final decision on eligible expenditure.

The department may update the guidance on eligible and ineligible expenditure from time to time. Applicants that require advice about the eligibility of project costs should contact the department (refer to section 14).

4.1.1 Eligible expenditure

To be eligible, expenditure must be:

- a direct cost of the project
- incurred/required for approved project activities
- incurred prior to the completion of the project (i.e. when all activities associated with the project have been delivered as per the agreed scope).

Eligible expenditure on a project can include, but is not limited to:

- contractor costs
- costs associated with contractors who undertake project activities including items and materials purchased by contractors
- employee and labour hire
- the portion of employee and labour hire costs directly related to undertaking core project activities
- the portion of project management costs directly related to undertaking core project activities
- plant and equipment hire
- materials
- consultant or in-house engineering, geology, hydrology, environment, cultural and heritage surveys and inspections (or similar) required to undertake the project, and directly related to core project activities
- ancillary costs directly related to the project, such as insurance costs
- land acquisition costs, but only in relation to the purchase of the land related to the project site
- costs incurred to meet Australian Government project signage requirements as set out in the Guidelines and/or the funding offer
- design costs, including engineering specifications, drawings, and other design activities (for design and construction projects)
- minor design revision costs incurred after construction commencement (for all projects).

4.1.2 Ineligible expenditure

A project should not commence construction prior to the funding offer being approved. Expenses incurred before a funding offer is approved are at the proponent's risk. Proponents should ensure they have sufficient funding to meet any project costs deemed ineligible.

Expenditure items that are ineligible include:

- ongoing maintenance and/or repair costs
- costs that cannot be directly linked to the approved project
- costs incurred before an application has been submitted or where construction works have been physically completed prior to funding approval
- approval costs including fees and charges for planning, environmental, cultural, and heritage and all other similar costs associated with pre-development approval
- procurement costs for materials or services that are not directly related to delivery of the project
- environmental offset costs
- routine operational expenses, including communications, administrative overheads, accommodation, office computing facilities, printing and stationery, postage, legal and accounting fees, loan interest and bank charges
- business as usual expenditure that is unrelated to the project, including but not limited to staff training, legal fees and media or advertising costs.

4.2 Project delivery timeframes

The ongoing nature of the Program is designed to encourage applicants to apply for funding for a project when that project is ready to commence. Projects that are at an early concept stage should generally be submitted at a later time, when planning and design work has progressed further and costs and timeframes are known with more certainty.

In general, projects are expected to be able to be completed within 2 years of commencing construction, as shown in the following table. Projects submitted with anticipated delivery timeframes outside this period may not be considered for funding.

Delivery milestone	Construction only projects	Design and construction projects
Completion of pre-construction design	Not applicable	Expected within 12 months of funding offer approval
Commencement of construction	Expected within 12 months of funding offer approval	Expected within 12 months of completion of design
Completion of construction	Expected within 2 years of the start of construction	Expected within 2 years of the start of construction
Acceptance of Post Completion Report (PCR)	Within 3 months of construction completion	Within 3 months of construction completion

5 Application process

The Program is an ongoing, application-based, merit-assessed program. There will typically be two funding tranches each year, with application opening and closing dates published on the department's website.

When submitting an application, consideration should be given to the overall timing of the funding tranche, including the assessment and approval phases. Following closure of a tranche, assessment and approval processes can take at least 12 weeks, and negotiation and approval of the funding offer for successful projects can take up to an additional 6-8 weeks. Projects should not commence construction until the funding offer has been approved, and doing so may result in the withdrawal of the funding offer. Applicants should account for these expected timeframes in terms of both construction timeframes and costs for a project.

5.1 How to apply

Before applying for funding under this Program, applicants should read and understand these Guidelines, as well as the resources available on the department's website.

To apply, applicants must:

- ensure the proposed project meets all the eligibility criteria
- complete and submit the application through the Reporting and Program Management (RPM) system
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility and assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments
- have the application form signed by a suitably authorised person from the organisation (e.g. Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chair of the Board) to confirm that the project and funding application is supported by the organisation and that the organisation can complete the project and meet the costs of the project activities as set out in the application.

Applicants should be aware that incomplete or incorrect applications may be deemed ineligible and not proceed to merit assessment.

Applicants should contact RPMsupport@infrastructure.gov.au if experiencing technical issues applying on the portal.

5.2 Application evidence

All claims made in the application form should be supported by evidence. The application form provides details of the supporting documents applicants may wish to include to support claims against the assessment criteria. The amount of detail and supporting evidence provided in the application should be relative to the size and complexity of the project and the funding being sought.

Applicants are responsible for ensuring any links to documents on public websites are correct and accessible at the time of submission. The department may contact applicants to clarify information provided in the application, but it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure all information provided in the application is correct and all supporting evidence has been supplied. New or additional information provided to the department after the application period has closed may not be considered by the department.

5.3 Merit assessment

The department will review all applications against the eligibility criteria. Eligible applications will then proceed to merit assessment. The department will consider each application on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the assessment criteria
- how it compares to other applications
- whether it provides value with relevant money.

When assessing the extent to which a proposal represents value with relevant money, the department may have regard to the:

- extent to which the evidence in the application has demonstrated the proposed project will meet the Program objectives
- relative value of the funding sought
- overall deliverability of the proposed project, including whether the project is ready to proceed, and
- the extent to which the application adequately addresses how project risks will be effectively managed.

5.4 Assessment criteria

There are three assessment criteria against which all eligible applications will be assessed to ensure value with relevant money. Applications must address all the assessment criteria in the application and provide evidence to support the responses.

The assessment criteria are all equally weighted. The department will not recommend projects for funding that do not score at least 60% against each assessment criterion, as these applications will not be deemed to provide value with relevant money.

Further guidance on information and evidence to support claims against each of the criteria is included in the application form and supporting materials available on the department's website.

Criterion 1: Strategic fit

Outline the rationale for the project, why there is a strong case for action, the fitness for purpose of the proposal in achieving the Program objectives, and how it meets the needs of the community.

- Explain how the project aligns with the Program's road safety objective.
- Explain how the project aligns with the nominated primary Program objective (where it is not road safety).
- Explain how the project directly contributes to relevant national, state, territory and local government goals, objectives, policies and strategic plans.
- Explain the case for change, including the problem it seeks to address and what the opportunities are, and how the project will directly address the issue/s.

- Justify why the proposal is the most appropriate response to address the issue/s and opportunities.
- Outline the support for the proposal and buy-in from stakeholders and the community, noting how it responds to their needs, and if there is any known community opposition to the proposed project.

Criterion 2: Project benefits and impact

Demonstrate the impact of the project with evidence-based analysis. This includes direct project benefits once the project is complete as well as benefits during the construction of the project.

- Explain how the project provides economic benefits, including productivity, infrastructure resilience, efficiency and employment benefits.
- Explain how the project provides social benefits, including safety and accessibility benefits.
- Explain how the project improves outcomes for First Nations people and vulnerable communities.
- Explain the environmental impacts of the project, including addressing sustainability, and measures to address adverse impacts.

Criterion 3: Project deliverability

Demonstrate the capability and capacity to deliver the project, including mitigating identified risks.

- Outline the plan to deliver the project within the expected timeframes, including identifying key expected delivery milestones.
- Detail the skills and capacity of those being engaged to deliver the project, including the relevant skills, experience and performance history.
- State if the required approvals to deliver the project have been obtained, including development, cultural and environmental approvals. If they have not been granted, outline when they will be sought and the expected timeframe for approvals to be granted.
- State if land acquisition and/or the relocation of utilities is required, and if consent has been provided. If it has not been provided, outline when it will be sought and the expected timeframe for consent to be granted.
- Explain the size and adequacy of the project budget, including allowances for contingency and how any cost overruns will be managed by the proponent.
- Outline governance arrangements and how they are appropriate for successful delivery of the project.
- Outline the procurement model for the project, and how it contributes to the wider outcomes listed in section 6.4.
- Outline project risks, including where there may be project delays, cost overruns and/or changes in scope.
- Outline risk mitigation strategies to effectively manage the project risks.

5.5 Ministerial decision making

Upon completion of the assessment of a tranche of applications, the department will recommend projects to the Minister (or their delegate) for approval. Recommendations to the Minister (or delegate) will be informed by the department's merit assessment and the available Program budget for each funding tranche.

Where there are more meritorious projects in a tranche than available funding allows, the department may need to undertake a moderation process before making recommendations to the Minister. In these circumstances, consideration will be given to a range of factors including, but not limited to:

- achieving a spread of projects in different project streams
- achieving a spread of projects meeting different program objectives
- the relative value of the project and requested funding
- the extent to which prior funding has been awarded to an applicant in previous tranches
- whether any applicant has more than one meritorious project within a tranche
- the capacity of the proponent to deliver the project considering progress on other active Australian Government-funded projects.

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

5.6 Notification of outcomes

Following the Minister's (or delegate's) decision, the department will contact all applicants to advise of the outcome of their application. Applicants will be offered the opportunity to seek feedback from the department on unsuccessful applications.

6 Successful applications

6.1 Funding offers

After an application is approved, the department will contact the proponent to schedule an inception meeting to discuss the process for finalising delivery arrangements for the project and outline delivery and reporting expectations across the life of the project. The department will confirm the delivery arrangements including final scope, budget and milestones, and issue a funding offer for each approved project that reflects these arrangements.

Proponents must review, sign and return the funding offer within 30 calendar days from it being issued. If a signed funding offer is not received by the department within 30 calendar days from the time it is sent out, the department may withdraw funding for the project.

The department will share LGA proponents' approved funding offers with their relevant state or territory government agency to assist with the management of milestone payments and reporting.

Proponents should not commence construction on an approved project until the department has provided written confirmation that the funding offer has been approved. This includes not awarding tenders or construction contracts. For design and construction projects, design work can commence prior to the funding offer being approved, but only design costs incurred after the project application was submitted will be considered eligible expenses. If design work has been fully completed prior to the approval of the funding offer, the delegate may consider those design costs to be ineligible. Costs incurred prior to formal approval of a funding offer are at the applicant's own risk.

6.2 Milestone payments

Payments will be made based on achievement of agreed milestones, as set out in the approved funding offer. In developing the agreed milestones, the following principles will apply:

- milestones should generally reflect the critical path for project delivery
- there must be milestones for commencement of construction, completion of construction, and acceptance of the Post-Completion Report (PCR)
- no individual milestone will be for more than 40% of approved Program funding
- completion of design milestones cannot be more than 10% of approved Program funding
- the acceptance of PCR milestone must be for at least 10% of approved Program funding.

If preferred by the Proponent, the following default milestones and payment percentages will be applied. Final milestones will be agreed through the project inception meeting and set out in the funding offer.

Milestone	Construction only projects	Design and construction projects
Completion of pre-construction design	Not applicable	10% of Program funding
Commencement of construction	40% of Program funding	40% of Program funding
Completion of construction	40% of Program funding	30% of Program funding
Acceptance of PCR	20% of Program funding	20% of Program funding

6.2.1 Achievement of milestones

Milestone claim forms must be submitted for each payment and are available on the department's website. This form outlines the minimum evidence requirements for each milestone. Proponents must provide evidence to support the claim that the milestone has been achieved for payment to be made. The department has the discretion to accept, reject or request further evidence prior to approving a claim for payment.

Where projects are led by LGA proponents, the department will make payments to the relevant state/territory government agency, which will then make payments to the proponent in line with the requirements under the FFAS. The state/territory government agency may have additional requirements of the proponent before funds can be paid, such as the provision of an invoice. Payment arrangements must be made directly between the proponent and the relevant state/territory government agency.

Proponents should advise the department in writing as soon as possible if an upcoming milestone is unlikely to be achieved on time and discuss and agree with the department in writing as to whether a formal variation is required to be submitted to give effect to a change in the milestone schedule.

6.3 Construction standards

All construction must comply with relevant Australian and state/territory standards in place at the time of construction, including construction standards, building codes and work health and safety requirements.

6.3.1 Construction requirements for Heavy Vehicle Facilities

Proponents delivering projects under the Heavy Vehicle Facilities stream should refer to the Austroads *Guidelines for the Provision of Heavy Vehicle Rest Area Facilities* for guidance on design and construction considerations.

Successful projects under this project stream must fulfil the mandatory construction elements set out below, where relevant to the project type.

For formal heavy vehicle rest areas:

- the rest area must be named and include a sign indicating that name
- signage must indicate the distance to the next heavy vehicle rest area on the route, in both directions
- where a rest area includes different zones for different types of vehicles, signage must be installed directing drivers to those zones e.g. livestock trucks, caravans/motorhomes, and effluent dump
- where truck wash facilities or decoupling/changeover facilities are located at a rest area, they must be separated from the rest area by suitable physical and acoustic barriers to minimise noise and operational impacts.

For informal heavy vehicle rest areas:

- green reflectors must be provided on the approaches to the rest area.

6.4 Procurement

Funding recipients must call for public tenders for all work on an approved project unless an exemption has been granted, consistent with the requirements of the NLT Act.

Proponents must comply with the rules and guidelines in their state or territory for the expenditure of public money and the procurement of goods and services.

Consistent with procurement requirements outlined in the FFAS and considering the opportunities and market capabilities in their respective jurisdictions, proponents should seek to optimise procurement practices to deliver value for money and enable the wider outcomes listed below:

a) an uplift in socioeconomic outcomes for First Nations people and businesses and First Nations cultural heritage protection, in line with Closing the Gap.
b) a reduction in embodied carbon in transport infrastructure in line with Australia's Net Zero commitments
c) an increase in women's participation at all levels of the construction industry
d) optimising recycled content in transport infrastructure to support Australia's transition to a circular economy by 2030

e) supporting opportunities for Australian and local businesses and industry, and direct employment with local government where possible
f) optimising opportunities for trainees and apprentices, including Australian Skills Guarantee targets, to ensure a pipeline of skilled workers
g) optimising opportunities to enhance construction sector culture and participation, including flexibility, wellbeing and diversity.

7 Project costs

The Program funding amount and the percentage split for the project are set out in the funding offer. Changes to the approved Program funding can only be made in exceptional circumstances and through a formal variation (see section 8).

7.1 Projects over budget

All costs over the approved Program funding are the responsibility of the proponent. The project budget as set out in the application should be developed using a robust cost estimation process, with sufficient contingency applied. Further guidance is included in the application form.

Provision of any additional Program funds will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, upon formal written request to the department. The proponent must investigate other options to address any potential cost increase for the project before seeking a funding increase from the department. The Minister (or delegate) will have sole discretion as to the approval or rejection of a request for additional funding. Any request for additional funding must maintain the approved funding split, and total Program funding cannot exceed $5 million per project.

7.2 Projects under budget

Where an approved project is completed under the original budget, the savings must be shared proportionally between the Australian Government and the proponent in accordance with the approved funding splits for the project. The Australian Government's share of any project savings will be returned to the Program for future tranches. Proponents cannot use savings on one project towards other projects.

8 Project variations

The department recognises that unexpected events may affect delivery of a project. Proponents should contact the department as soon as possible once the need for a variation is identified.

Project variations must be requested by completing the department's Project Variation Form, available on the department's website. The department may request additional information from the proponent to assist with the department's consideration of the request.

The proponent must submit a project variation request, including when proposing to:

- change the project name
- change the project scope

- amend project delivery timeframes
- request additional Program funding (see section 7.1).

Project variations must be approved in writing prior to any change in work. Proponents should not assume that a variation request will be successful, and any works undertaken prior to a variation request being approved are at the proponent's own risk. The Minister (or delegate) has complete discretion to approve or reject variation requests. Outcomes of these requests will be provided in writing to the proponent. The department will endeavour to provide a decision within 4 weeks of receiving a completed project variation request.

9 Reporting and governance

Proponents have obligations to report on the status of their projects, in line with the terms of the NLT Act, the funding offer, the FFAS and as outlined below or as otherwise agreed in writing with the department.

9.1 Meetings

Proponents are required to meet with the department on a regular basis throughout the delivery of their project, to discuss project progress and monitor risks. The frequency of these ongoing meetings will be agreed at the inception meeting.

9.2 Quarterly reporting

Proponents are required to provide quarterly reports detailing the status of their project(s), including information on project progress, timelines (including if milestones are on track), risks and finances (including if it is anticipated a project will have cost overruns or savings). The required timing and format of these reports will be set out in the funding offer.

9.3 Ad-hoc reporting

If there is a material change to a project outside of the quarterly reporting period, proponents must inform the department as soon as possible.

Examples of incidents that require ad-hoc reporting to the department include:

- change of senior personnel on the project, such as the project manager
- change to the funding sources for the project, such as the granting of further funding from other sources or changes to the co-contributor/s
- issues that are likely to impact the delivery of the project (e.g. extreme weather, natural disasters or unforeseen project management issues).

The department may request information on an ad-hoc basis regarding project delivery, to meet its requirements under the Program and FFAS. Proponents must provide this information within the timeframe the department specifies.

9.4 Financial records and acquittal of Program funds

Proponents must keep financial records for each project and be able to accurately report on costs. Program funding must be fully acquitted through the Post Completion Report (PCR) to substantiate the amount of the final payment. Proponents are required to provide a PCR within 3 months of the completion of their project's construction.

10 Events, announcements, promotions and publicity

If a proponent proposes to hold an event in relation to a funded project (e.g. start of works, project completion, opening etc) they must inform the department at least 4 weeks before the proposed event is to be held. Details of the proposed event should be sent to events@infrastructure.gov.au, and they will liaise with the appropriate Australian Government official on the proponent's behalf. If requested by the department or Australian Government representative, proponents are expected to arrange a joint event.

Any media release about a funded project is expected to acknowledge Australian Government funding and must be cleared by the department prior to use. A draft should be provided to media@infrastructure.gov.au at least 5 working days prior to its proposed release.

If a proponent proposes to issue any other communications, digital posts, displays, publications or advertising relating to the project, they should acknowledge and give appropriate recognition to the contribution of the Australian Government. A draft should be provided to events@infrastructure.gov.au at least 5 working days prior to its proposed release.

Proponents should include SLRIP-projects@infrastructure.gov.au into this correspondence to ensure the project officers are aware of any upcoming media or events.

10.1 Signage requirements

Proponents must install signage prior to the commencement of construction of a project in accordance with the Signage Guidelines available on the department's website. Proponents are required to submit final design proofs of signs and plaques to events@infrastructure.gov.au for clearance prior to production and installation. Proponents should ensure their manufacturing timetable deadlines include sufficient time for comment and approvals from the department (5 working days may be required).

Please include SLRIP-projects@infrastructure.gov.au into this correspondence.

11 Withdrawal and cancellation of projects

Proponents may request to withdraw a project using the department's Project Withdrawal Form available on the department's website.

In circumstances where Program 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 from the proponent.

In certain circumstances the department may seek to cancel or withdraw funding for a project, including where a proponent has failed to comply with obligations under these Guidelines or in the funding offer. Further details on the circumstances of when the termination of a project may be triggered will be set out in the funding offer.

12 Administration

12.1 Amendment of the Guidelines

The Australian Government may amend these Guidelines (and any supporting documentation referenced within) from time-to-time. Applicants must comply with updated Guidelines from the time they are published. Updates will be communicated and published on the department's website.

12.2 Confidentiality

Information from applications may be used for reporting purposes. Details of funded projects, including the project name, project scope, funding recipient, Program funding provided and project costs, will be made publicly available on the department's website.

Project details (including details from confidential applications) may be disclosed to other government agencies where necessary. This includes the sharing of LGA funding offers, and other relevant documentation, with their state or territory government agency, to assist with the management of project payments.

Applicants should identify any information submitted which they are seeking to be considered confidential, supported by reasons for the request. Automatically-generated confidentiality statements or disclaimers appended to an email do not suffice for this purpose. The Australian Government reserves the right to accept or refuse a request to treat information as confidential. The *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) applies to the handling of personal information about individuals obtained during the delivery of the Program.

Information received (including confidential and personal information) may be disclosed by the Commonwealth as permitted or required by law, or in response to a request from a Commonwealth Minister, or from a Committee or a House of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia.

12.3 Probity

It is important that the Australian Government avoids bias and the perception of bias and other probity issues in the operation of this Program.

Any information which may have a material impact on the decision to approve an application must be disclosed in the application. This includes any actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Failing to declare relevant information or making a false declaration on the application may make it ineligible or result in the withdrawal of a funding offer.

13 Evaluation

Evaluation of the Program may be undertaken from time to time to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. The department may use information from applications, funding offers and reports for this purpose.

If requested by the department, proponents will be required to provide additional information for evaluation. The department may contact proponents up to two years after projects are completed to seek information to assist with evaluation.

14 Enquiries about the Program

For general enquiries or questions related to applications: SLRIP-applications@infrastructure.gov.au.

For matters related to approved projects: SLRIP-projects@infrastructure.gov.au.

15 Glossary

Term	Definition
applicant	The Local Government Authority, state or territory government agency which submits the application. Applications with multiple co-funding partners must have a single eligible lead applicant.
application	A completed application form, and associated documents, requesting funding under the Program. If approved, applications become projects.
conflict of interest	The exercise of a power or making of a decision by a person in a way that may be, or may be perceived to be, influenced by either a material personal interest (whether financial or non-financial) or a material personal association.
design	The plans, specifications and other related materials which together provide the instructions for construction of the project.
department	The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts.
eligible application	An application for funding under the Program that meets the eligibility requirements in accordance with these Guidelines.
FFA	Federation Funding Agreement – Infrastructure.
FFAS	Federation Funding Agreement Schedule.
FFR	Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations.
funding offer	A document, which in conjunction with these Guidelines, lays outs out the delivery arrangements of an approved project, including the project name, project scope, project cost, Program funding amount, maximum Program funding percentage, milestone details and delivery requirements.
LGA	As per the NLT Act, a body established for the purposes of local government by or under a law applying in a State or Territory.
NLT Act	*National Land Transport Act 2014* (Cth).
PCR	Post Completion Report.
Program funding	The Program funding amount and percentage committed to a project under the Program.
State and Territory Governments	State and Territory Governments are the: • Australian Capital Territory Government • New South Wales Government • Northern Territory Government • Queensland Government • South Australia Government • Tasmanian Government • Victorian Government • Western Australia Government.
Program	The Safer Local Roads Infrastructure Program.
proponent	The eligible entity delivering the project.