



Aboriginal
Affairs



Aboriginal Affairs NSW 2021 COVID-19 Aboriginal Community Organisations Grants Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Applications open Monday 22 February 2021

Applications close 5pm Friday 14 May 2021

Closing now at 5pm on 21 May 2021

Apply at aboriginalaffairs.smartygrants.com.au/

These Frequently Asked Questions are designed to help organisations and groups that wish to apply for a grant. Please read these in combination with the Guidelines and online application form in [SmartyGrants](#).

Contents

Program Overview	1
What is the purpose of the COVID-19 Aboriginal Community Organisations Grants Program?	1
What are the key stages for this program?	1
How do I apply?.....	1
How do I find out more about the COVID-19 Aboriginal Community Organisations Grants Program?	1
Is this a competitive grants program?	2
Funding	2
Will all applicants receive funding?	2
Is there a limit on the amount of funding that can be applied for?	2
Will a successful applicant receive all the funding they requested?	2
If AANSW receives a lot of applications early in the program, will we miss out if we're not ready to apply until April or May?.....	2
What will not be funded?	2
Should I include GST in my budget?.....	3
What do I do if COVID-19 restrictions impact the delivery of all, or part, of my project?	3
Eligibility	3
Who can apply?.....	3
Who cannot apply?.....	3
We're not an Aboriginal community controlled organisation but we work with a lot of Aboriginal people. Why can't we apply?	4
Can Aboriginal organisations make a joint application or a 'partnership' application?	4
Our group is not incorporated, is there any way we can apply for funding?.....	4
Are there insurance requirements that affect an organisation's eligibility?	4
Writing and submitting an application	4
What is the application process?	4
What is SmartyGrants?.....	5
Why is the application process online?	5
How do I apply online?	5
What type of device and internet browser do I need to apply online?.....	5
I don't have reliable access to the internet, how can I apply online?	5
Is my application and information secure? Is it safe to apply online?	6
Can I download a copy of the application form in advance?	6
Do I need to complete my application in one session?	6
Can I review what I have written online?.....	6
Will I receive a confirmation email that my application has been received?	6

Will I get a copy of my application once I have submitted it online?	6
How do I get help if I am having trouble completing my application?	6
Are there instructions on how to complete my application online?	6
Why do I need to provide my bank account as part of my application?	6
What questions will I be asked in the application, can I print them out first?	7
Assessment process for applications	7
Can I submit more than one application for funding?	7
Will late applications be considered?	7
What happens after my application has been submitted? How long before we're notified if our application is successful or not?	7
How will I find out the outcome?	7
If our application is unsuccessful can we resubmit it during the opening period?	7
Projects funded by the program	7
What types of activities can be funded?	7
What are some examples of projects that the program might fund?	8
Can I purchase updated operating systems for our organisation, for example Microsoft 10 to facilitate the use of online platforms like Zoom and Microsoft Teams?	9
Can we pay for the installation of improved internet services so we can reconnect and re-engage with our community members?	9
Can we engage trainers to teach staff and volunteers in our organisation how to better use the online technology to be more adaptable in response to COVID restrictions?	9
Why does the application ask for project location information?	9
Reporting and meeting grant requirements	9
What is the grant acquittal process?	9
When do projects need to be completed by?	9
More information	10
Who do I contact for further information?	10

Program Overview

What is the purpose of the COVID-19 Aboriginal Community Organisations Grants Program?

The purpose of the program is to support Aboriginal Community Organisations (ACCOs) that have been impacted by COVID-19. The program supports ACCOs to continue providing culturally appropriate, locally based support for Aboriginal communities, particularly in regional and remote areas, and to the people who rely on these services.

What are the key stages for this program?

Grant Stage	Timeline	Key Dates
Grant Round Opens	9.00am 22 February 2021	
Grant Round Closes	5.00pm 14 May 2021	
Assessment and Approvals Application Outcome notifications	22 February to 14 May 2021	Applications will be assessed and approved as they are received Applicants are notified of the outcome within 10 days of their application being submitted
Funding Acceptance	22 February to 31 May 2021	
Funds Released	22 February to 11 June 2021	
Projects Delivered	19 April 2021 – 30 June 2022	
Completion Reports and Acquittals	30 July 2022 latest	30 days after completion of project or 30 July 2022, whichever occurs first

How do I apply?

Contact your nearest Aboriginal Affairs NSW (AANSW) office to discuss your project idea. If you are eligible to apply, AANSW will open an application for you to complete online in [SmartyGrants](#).

How do I find out more about the COVID-19 Aboriginal Community Organisations Grants Program?

For any questions regarding the program, please contact your nearest AANSW regional office on the phone numbers below:

Batemans Bay	02 4478 2659
Tamworth	02 5778 1804
Coffs Harbour	02 5646 5101
Broken Hill	08 8088 0003
Bourke	02 5834 7001
Dubbo	02 6887 4402
Newcastle	02 4924 7007
Sydney	02 8362 6673
COVID team	1800 019 998

Website: www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au

Email: grants@aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au

Is this a competitive grants program?

Yes. There are limited funds and all eligible applications will be assessed against the assessment criteria.

Funding

Will all applicants receive funding?

No. The application process is competitive for the funding available. Successful applications will be those that meet the eligibility criteria and best address the assessment criteria.

Is there a limit on the amount of funding that can be applied for?

Yes. Applicants can apply for grants up to \$50,000 per project or per organisation.

Will a successful applicant receive all the funding they requested?

Not necessarily. Partial funding may be offered if part of an applicant's activities are ineligible for funding – for example the purchase of a car, or if a component of the project does not meet the program criteria.

If this is the case, AANSW will contact you to discuss your application and what components of your project can still go ahead with partial funding.

If AANSW receives a lot of applications early in the program, will we miss out if we're not ready to apply until April or May?

No. The program is open for applications until 5.00pm 14 May 2021.

However, as interested applicants must contact AANSW to discuss their project before an application is open, we encourage you to do this as early as possible in the grant round.

Even if you're not yet ready to commence your project, please contact AANSW and we will discuss your timeframes and release of funding with you.

What will not be funded?

Funding cannot be used for:

- extensions to buildings or other major capital works
- costs for individual sporting teams or cultural groups to attend competitions or events
- buying alcohol
- buying vehicles such as cars and buses
- operating costs or recurrent expenses (e.g. wages, salaries and on-costs for permanent staff or rent)
- sitting fees, travel allowance or costs associated with membership of Boards/councils
- international travel costs; however proposals for domestic travel costs need to demonstrate the benefits of travel to the project, organisation and community
- to cover costs that are not directly associated with the delivery of the project
- an organisation's operating costs (e.g. staffing, consultants, rent, phone and electricity bills).

Projects will not be eligible for funding if they are:

- the core responsibility of another government agency, for example health services, legal aid, etc.
- receiving funding from another source for the same project and there is no clear distinction between what that funding and the funding under this Program will be used.

Should I include GST in my budget?

No. Your budget in the application form should exclude GST. Include the costs of all budget items without the GST that would be payable.

If your application is successful and your organisation or the auspice organisation is registered for GST, you will be paid GST in addition to the approved grant funding. If your organisation is not registered for GST, you will only be paid the grant amount.

What do I do if COVID-19 restrictions impact the delivery of all, or part, of my project?

If your project is impacted by COVID-19 restrictions and you are unable to deliver the project as outlined in your application form or in accordance with the Funding Agreement, you must inform AANSW via email at grants@aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au as soon as possible.

We will then discuss a possible variation to the project or return of unspent funds with you.

Eligibility

Who can apply?

Organisations that wish to apply must be a not-for-profit incorporated Aboriginal community organisation (i.e. has been initiated by, is controlled and operated by Aboriginal people and/or governed by a board or committee of Aboriginal people) in NSW to be eligible for funding. This includes:

- an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Corporation registered under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (Cth)
- a company incorporated in Australia under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth)
- a Local Aboriginal Land Council under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* (NSW)
- an Incorporated Association (incorporated under state legislation, and commonly have 'Association' or 'Incorporated' or 'Inc' in their legal name)
- an Incorporated Cooperative (incorporated under state legislation, and commonly have 'Cooperative' in their legal name)
- an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust.

Applicants must be located in NSW or demonstrate a service to communities within NSW.

Applicants must have, or be able and willing to purchase, at least \$20 million public liability insurance. The cost of public liability insurance for the purposes of the project can be included in the project budget as part of the administration costs.

Who cannot apply?

Applicants **will not be** eligible for funding if they are:

- individuals
- Local councils
- State and Federal government agencies
- NSW Public Schools, Universities and TAFE colleges

- incorporated organisations that are not Aboriginal community controlled
- unincorporated organisations or groups without an eligible auspicing organisation
- organisations that have not met project requirements, including acquittal and reporting for previous funding received from Aboriginal Affairs NSW.

We're not an Aboriginal community controlled organisation but we work with a lot of Aboriginal people. Why can't we apply?

This grant was specifically allocated in the NSW 2020/21 Budget to support Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations recover from the impacts of COVID-19.

Please visit the NSW Government [website](#) for information on supporting NSW during COVID-19 [here](#) for alternative funding that may be available to support your type of organisation or group.

Can Aboriginal organisations make a joint application or a 'partnership' application?

Yes. If you are applying as part of a partnership arrangement, one of the organisations in the partnership will need to take the lead role in the project and apply for the grant. If the project is successful the Funding Agreement will be with the applicant organisation.

If your Aboriginal organisation or group is unincorporated but wishes to apply for a grant, your organisation will need to enter into an auspicing agreement with an eligible organisation. This auspicing organisation will need to apply for the grant and the Funding Agreement will be established with this auspicing organisation. The unincorporated organisation will be listed as a project partner in the application.

We suggest that in these circumstances you develop an auspicing agreement between the unincorporated and auspicing organisations which clearly describes each organisation's role and responsibilities.

Our group is not incorporated, is there any way we can apply for funding?

Unincorporated groups that are Aboriginal community-led, such as Elders groups, can apply through an eligible organisation. The auspice organisation's details must be included in the application form as the applicant. Refer to the answer above for more details on an auspice arrangement or 'partnership'.

Are there insurance requirements that affect an organisation's eligibility?

Yes. Applicants must have, or be able and willing to purchase, at least \$20 million public liability insurance.

The cost of public liability insurance for the purposes of the project can be included in the project budget as part of the administration costs.

Writing and submitting an application

What is the application process?

Contact your nearest [AANSW office](#) or the COVID team (at the Mascot office) to discuss whether your project meets the program eligibility and criteria.

If you are eligible to apply, AANSW will open an application for you to complete online in [SmartyGrants](#). You will be emailed a link to the application and instructions on completing the form.

Fill out the fields in the form, remembering to press save regularly, and submit when all fields have been completed, hit submit.

AANSW will have a panel of assessors to review each application and notify the applicant of the outcome within 10 working days.

What is SmartyGrants?

[SmartyGrants](#) is a user-friendly web-based grant management system. It enables AANSW to oversee the entire program online including the applications, grant maintenance and communications.

Why is the application process online?

Applying online means we will be able to reduce the program's reliance on paper, reducing the need for applicants to print documents. It utilises available technology and makes the application process simpler and quicker.

How do I apply online?

You will need to register in the [SmartyGrants](#) system. Click on the links and follow the instructions on the page. The registration process is simple and straightforward. Once registered, you will be able to start your application. If you have previously registered on [SmartyGrants](#), you do not have to re-register.

What type of device and internet browser do I need to apply online?

To complete an application form, you will need access to the internet on a PC or Mac desktop or laptop computer, or a tablet or smartphone (although some tablet and phone devices may not display or interact correctly or clearly as the site is not optimised for smartphones).

There is no need to install software. To access [SmartyGrants](#), you only need an internet browser and an internet connection.

[SmartyGrants](#) is compatible with the latest versions of the following browsers:

- Google Chrome
- Safari
- Firefox
- Opera
- Internet Explorer / Microsoft Edge.

While [SmartyGrants](#) does try to ensure backwards compatibility with older versions, there may be some limitations.

I don't have reliable access to the internet, how can I apply online?

Applications can be completed at any time before the closing date.

Applications can be completed across multiple sessions. You can access the application form and system using any computer that has an internet connection. You can use the computer at your local library, seek assistance from your Local Council, or even your local AANSW office.

As a last resort, hard copy application forms can be requested from AANSW and completed. Hard copy application forms must be received by AANSW prior to the closing date.

Is my application and information secure? Is it safe to apply online?

Yes. It is safe to apply online. Your application and information are submitted to a secure database which is only able to be accessed by authorised program staff and assessors. Your information does not go 'offshore', it is securely held in a data warehouse in Sydney and is backed up regularly.

Can I download a copy of the application form in advance?

Yes. Once you register you will be able to download a copy of the application form.

Do I need to complete my application in one session?

No. You can complete your application in multiple sessions. Remember to save your application regularly. In order for your application to be considered you will need to submit your application.

When your application is ready to lodge click on the **Submit** button.

Can I review what I have written online?

Yes. Before submitting your application you are able to review what you have written. You will not be able to change any part of the application once submitted, so please ensure you review it before.

Will I receive a confirmation email that my application has been received?

Yes. When you submit your application online you will be sent a confirmation email which confirms that your application has been received. The confirmation email will be sent to your nominated email address so please keep AANSW updated if your contact details change.

This confirmation email will contain your application's unique ID or reference number, as well as a copy of your application. Please keep this in a safe place as part of your records, as you may need to refer to it at a later date. If you have any questions regarding your application, you will need to quote your application's unique ID number.

Will I get a copy of my application once I have submitted it online?

Yes. It will be attached to the confirmation email you will receive. It will be sent to your nominated email address. Please keep it in a safe place as part of your records, as you may need to refer to it at a later date. You can also access a copy of your application through the '**My Submissions**' area once you have logged into the online system.

How do I get help if I am having trouble completing my application?

You can get help by looking at the information posted on the [SmartyGrants](#) website, which contains a document with instructions on how to complete your application online. You can also get help by contacting the AANSW regional offices listed at the end of this document.

Are there instructions on how to complete my application online?

Yes. Instructions on how to complete an online application can be downloaded from the [SmartyGrants](#) website. These instructions include an easy step-by-step process which will help you complete your application online.

Why do I need to provide my bank account as part of my application?

Bank account details are required at application stage to reduce delay in payments.

If your application is successful and you have completed the funding agreement the funds will be paid automatically to your nominated bank account.

What questions will I be asked in the application, can I print them out first?

The Step By Step Guide for Applicants on the [AANSW](#) website includes a copy of the application form, which you can download before starting your application.

A copy of the application form can also be downloaded once you have registered in the online system.

Assessment process for applications

Can I submit more than one application for funding?

Applicants can apply more than once for different projects and may receive funding for more than one project.

However, due to limited funds a maximum of \$50,000 per organisation will be awarded.

Will late applications be considered?

No, applications will close at 5.00pm 14 May 2021.

Late applications will not be accepted under any circumstances.

We encourage all prospective applicants to lodge their application well in advance of the closing date. Do not leave your application to the last minute.

What happens after my application has been submitted? How long before we're notified if our application is successful or not?

An Assessment panel of AANSW staff will review each application and notify applicants of the outcome within 10 working days.

How will I find out the outcome?

AANSW will advise all applicants of application outcomes by email. This email will be sent to the applicant contact email addresses as provided in grant application.

Please let AANSW know if your contact details change throughout the grants process so we can update our records.

If our application is unsuccessful can we resubmit it during the opening period?

No. However, you may wish to make an application against a different criteria in the grant. Please contact your nearest [AANSW regional office](#) or the COVID team (at the Mascot office).

Projects funded by the program

What types of activities can be funded?

The following are examples of the types of activities that can be funded under the COVID-19

Aboriginal Community Organisations Grants program:

- costs associated with holding key state-wide or regional Aboriginal sporting or cultural events in a COVID safe way
- engaging contractors, such as facilitators, trainers and teachers for the purpose of the project
- buying consumables for the purpose of the project, such as food and materials
- buying COVID-related minor equipment (e.g. screening equipment, personal protection equipment or thermometers) and minor equipment to be used as part of the project (e.g. kitchen utensils or equipment for a food security project)
- hire equipment to be used for the period of the project
- minor renovations or refurbishments, including purchase of furniture or large items that maintain COVID safe practices for an ACCO to operate. Examples of these costs which demonstrate clear links to the Program purpose include:
 - installation of indoor partitions to manage safe physical distancing and queuing
 - purchase of kitchen equipment or furniture set up to meet COVID safe food preparation and serving requirements
 - installation of an outdoor pergola/cover for groups to meet and maintain social distancing outdoors.

The application must include evidence of the landowner's consent for all renovations and refurbishments.

What are some examples of projects that the program might fund?

The program is open to all kinds of ideas as long as they fit the objectives of the Program, eligibility and assessment criteria.

Please contact your nearest [AANSW office](#) or the COVID team (at the Mascot office) to discuss your project idea.

These are some ideas to get you started (not an extensive list):

- Cultural wellbeing and education program for young people who are isolated and community is reporting increase in youth mental health issues due to COVID – employment of workshop facilitators, purchase of art materials, transport or catering.
- Implementation of a community garden and kitchen program staffed with community volunteers – purchase of cooking and garden equipment and employment of a contractor to project manage.
- Holding a COVID safe community cultural event – purchasing COVID safety equipment and consumables e.g. contactless temperature scanner, hand sanitiser, masks, COVID marshal vests.
- Healing program for a community that has been through significant Sorry Business – engaging culturally appropriate counsellors, catering or transport.
- Physical improvements in a LALC building to improve COVID safety – installation of indoor partitions to divide spaces and a screen at reception.
- Improvements to IT infrastructure to allow an ACCO to run more online programs – purchase of new computer operating systems, installation of new cabling and engagement of a trainer to teach staff and workshop facilitators how to get the most out of video and audio conferencing platforms e.g. Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

Can I purchase updated operating systems for our organisation, for example Microsoft 10 to facilitate the use of online platforms like Zoom and Microsoft Teams?

Yes. However, as the funding is one-off you will need to take into consideration how your organisation will pay for future subscription costs.

Can we pay for the installation of improved internet services so we can reconnect and re-engage with our community members?

Yes. Your application must include evidence of the landowner's consent for these types of works.

Can we engage trainers to teach staff and volunteers in our organisation how to better use the online technology to be more adaptable in response to COVID restrictions?

Yes. Engagement of contractors can be funded under the Program.

Why does the application ask for project location information?

Project location information helps AANSW understand what activities and events are being held across NSW as part of the assessment process.

Location information will help us map and promote events as well as report to community and Government on activities.

Reporting and meeting grant requirements

What is the grant acquittal process?

It is a condition of funding that all recipients must complete a Project Completion and Acquittal Report online in [SmartyGrants](#) within 30 days of the completion of the event or activity. AANSW will send all recipients an email reminder before this report is due.

AANSW requires applicants to provide proof of expenditure of grant funds, such as copies of invoices and receipts for purchases, as a minimum.

Receipts must be provided for all goods, supplies and/or services purchased. Where relevant, recipients may also provide additional evidence to demonstrate project outcomes (e.g. photos, media coverage, links to video clips, etc.).

If AANSW is not satisfied with the information provided, we may ask for additional information to demonstrate that the grant funds have been spent in accordance with the terms of the funding.

If the acquittal is not completed within the required timeframe you will not be eligible to apply for future AANSW Grants.

When do projects need to be completed by?

All projects must be completed by 30 July 2022 at the latest.

Completion reports for the projects are due to AANSW 30 days after the completion of event/project, or by 30 July 2022, whichever occurs sooner.

More information

Who do I contact for further information?

For any questions regarding the AANSW 2021 COVID-19 Aboriginal Community Organisations Grants, please email grants@aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au or contact your nearest Aboriginal Affairs NSW regional office or the COVID team on the phone numbers below:

Batemans Bay	02 4478 2659
Tamworth	02 5778 1804
Coffs Harbour	02 5646 5101
Broken Hill	08 8088 0003
Bourke	02 5834 7001
Dubbo	02 6887 4402
Newcastle	02 4924 7007
Sydney	02 8362 6673
COVID team	1800 019 998