



Aboriginal Affairs NSW Cultural Grants Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Applications open and closing dates.

Round 1

Open – 28th August 2023

Close – 9th October 2023

Project Delivery Timelines – between 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

Round 2

Open – 15th January 2024

Close – 26th February 2024

Project Delivery Timelines – between 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

Apply at <https://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 [Program Guidelines](#) and online application form in SmartyGrants.

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Program Overview

What is the purpose of the Aboriginal Affairs NSW (AANSW) Cultural Grants Program?

The program aims to support Aboriginal community organisations across NSW to celebrate Aboriginal culture and hold cultural events and activities.

What are the program objectives?

The Aboriginal Affairs NSW (AANSW) Cultural Grants Program objectives are:

- Support Aboriginal communities to strengthen, protect, and maintain traditional and contemporary expressions of Aboriginal culture
- Support key contemporary Aboriginal cultural events and activities
- Contribute to Aboriginal community wellbeing and healing, using Aboriginal culture and community connection
- Facilitate sharing of Aboriginal cultural knowledge and skills between generations.

What are the opening and closing dates to apply for funding?

2023/2024 AANSW Cultural Grants Program opens twice a year, where applicants can apply at any time during the opening period.

Round 1

Open – 28th August 2023

Close – 9th October 2023

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their applications in December 2023.

Round 2

Open – 15th January 2024

Close – 26th February 2024

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their applications in May 2024.

What is the project delivery timeframe?

The projects must be delivered within the following timeframe:

Round 1

1st January 2024 – 31st December 2024

Round 2

1st July 2024 – 30th June 2025

What are the assessment criteria for the Aboriginal Affairs NSW (AANSW) Cultural Grants Program?

Applications will be assessed by the Grant Assessment Panel in the order they are received based on the following criteria:

- **Project Quality**
Evidence that the project meets the program aims and objectives.

- **Project Detail**
Explanation of what the funding will do and how it will be spent.
- **Project Impact**
Evidence of who the project will benefit and how this will be achieved.
- **Capacity**
Experience managing previous projects or relevant training and experience of key staff involved in the project.
- **Value for money**
It is clear how budget items contribute to the project outcomes. The budget is reasonable and realistic.

How to address the assessment criteria for the Aboriginal Affairs NSW (AANSW) Cultural Grants Program?

Assessment will be based on the following criteria:Criteria	Specific information and evidence required
<p>Criterion 1: Project quality</p> <p>Description of criterion: The project aligns with the program aim and objectives.</p>	<p>You should demonstrate this through identifying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the project meets the program aims and objectives • Project celebrates Aboriginal culture and/or includes key traditional or contemporary cultural events or activities • Project activities clearly demonstrate that the project addresses specific program objectives
<p>Criterion 2: Project detail</p> <p>Description of criterion: Clear description of the project objective, how it will be delivered, evidence to demonstrate need and community involvement, along with a list of project activities.</p>	<p>You should demonstrate this through identifying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed project plan, • Detailed description on project activities • implementation plan with explanation of what the funding will do and how it will be spent, • rationale for level of need, and information on who will be involved
<p>Criterion 3: Project impact</p> <p>Description of criterion: Detail on how the project will benefit the community, and will make a tangible contribution to the cultural health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people in local area within NSW.</p>	<p>You should demonstrate this through identifying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters of support from the local Aboriginal community (e.g. from local Aboriginal Elders (individuals or groups), community groups, or potential participants). Letters must be current and specific for the project. A letter of support provided by an Alliance/consortium, should clearly

Assessment will be based on the following criteria:Criteria	Specific information and evidence required
	<p>demonstrate support of the membership base of the Alliance/consortium.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of who the project will benefit and how this will be achieved
<p>Criterion 4: Organisation’s capacity to deliver the project</p> <p>Description of criterion:</p> <p>The ability of the organisation to deliver the project objectives based on its experience, and resources, community supports, such as partnerships with other organisations and participation in other community projects.</p>	<p>You should demonstrate this through identifying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience managing previous projects, and outcomes achieved; or Demonstrate the resources to deliver the project, or relevant training and experience of key staff involved in the project
<p>Criterion 5: Value for money</p> <p>Description of criterion:</p> <p>How the implementation of the project/event/activity will achieve high quality outcomes for Aboriginal communities in a cost-effective way.</p>	<p>You should demonstrate this through identifying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarity on how budget items contribute to the project outcomes The budget must be reasonable and realistic Quotes to support the budget line items/detailed budget aligned with the project activities and plan.

Is Aboriginal Affairs NSW (AANSW) 2023-2024 Cultural Grants Program a non-competitive grant program?

Yes – This is a non-competitive program, where applications are assessed against the criteria, not competitively against other applications.

Applications will be assessed by the Grant Assessment Panel (GAP) in the order they are received until the allocated funds are expended fully under the grant round.

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 1 month of the completion of the event or activity. AANSW will send all recipients an email reminder before this report is due.

AANSW requires recipients to provide evidence of project activity, such as photographs, videos, flyers, communications or social media posts, demonstrating the project event or activities. The recipient is also required to provide a statement of income and expenditure along with proof of purchase, such as receipts, paid invoices, a bank statement or profit and loss statement for the project funds.

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 satisfactorily completed within the required timeframe, you will not be eligible to apply for AANSW Grants for the next two years.

Why does the application ask for project location information?

Project location information helps Aboriginal Affairs NSW understand what activities and events are being held across New South Wales 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.

What documents do I need to attach with my applications?

Below are the documents that you need to attach with your application:

Essential Documents

The below documents are required before you submit your application:

- Two letters of support from the local Aboriginal community (e.g. from local Aboriginal Elders/groups, community groups, or potential participants). Letters must be current and specific to the project. A letter of support provided by an Alliance/consortium, should clearly demonstrate support of the membership base of the Alliance/consortium.
- Certificate of Currency (or a budget that includes the purchase of public liability insurance).
- Cost evidence for goods and services (except the cultural components/services) for budget items, such as hiring of venue, accommodation, catering, and hiring/purchase of equipment.

Recommended documents:

- Other documentation and evidence that supports your application (e.g. evidence of successfully delivering other projects, detailed project plan)

Funding

What types of activities can be funded?

Funding can be used for projects that meet the objectives of the Cultural Grants Program. The following are examples of the types of activities that may be considered for funding, where they are aligned with the program objectives. Your project does not need to be limited by these examples.

- women's or men's Gathering on Country
- a culture and wellbeing camp for Aboriginal youth
- creation of a digital installation showing Aboriginal history of the local community
- Statewide or regional music and cultural festival
- a series of online and/or face-to-face workshops
- community celebration event

Funding **can** be used for:

- purchase of consumables – such as catering, equipment items and materials for activities (excluding alcohol) – for the purposes of the project or event

- hiring equipment to be used for the period of the project or event
- engaging contractors such as facilitators, trainers and teachers
- eligible costs associated with holding key state-wide and/or regional Aboriginal sporting and cultural events
- purchasing minor equipment for event activities up to the value of \$5000 (please refer to the FAQ for guidance on minor equipment)
- administering the project, with up to 10 percent of the requested AANSW funding amount being able to be used for this task or as auspice fees where there is an auspicings arrangement
- Eligible sole trader applicants may include up to 10 percent of the requested AANSW funding amount to cover remuneration costs.

Will all applicants receive funding?

No, successful applications will be only those that meet the eligibility criteria and assessment criteria. The approval is subject to the availability of funds. Thus, applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible during the opening period.

Aboriginal Affairs NSW has allocated \$1 million for the Aboriginal Affairs NSW Cultural Grants Program in 2023-2024 to be split between 2 rounds.

Allocation for round 1: \$500,000

Allocation for round 2: \$500,000

Applications will be assessed in order of date of submission in SmartyGrants.

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

Applicants can apply for grants from \$500 to \$20,000.

What will happen with an application if the funds are fully expended before its assessment?

All applications will be assessed by the Grant Assessment Panel in the order they are received in SmartyGrants until the allocated funds are fully expended.

Any applications unable to be assessed in Round 1 due to the funding allocation being exhausted can opt to transfer the same un-assessed application to Round 2. Applications assessed as ineligible or unsuccessful in Round 1 will not have the option to be transferred to Round 2, however are able to reapply by submitting a new application for assessment in Round 2.

Applications that are not able to be assessed in Round 2 due to the funding allocation being exhausted cannot be transferred to any future Cultural Grants programs.

Will a successful application receive the full amount of funding requested?

Not necessarily. Partial funding may be offered to applicants so there is a wider and more equitable distribution of funds across communities. Partial funding may also be offered if part of an applicant's activities is ineligible for funding; for example, if it duplicates an existing funded project.

If partial funding is offered, applicants will need to assess whether the activity is viable or needs to be modified due to the reduced funding. Alternatively, the balance of funds could be obtained from other sources.

What is considered minor equipment for the purpose of this program?

Minor equipment is anything that will become an asset to the organisation. Some examples of equipment are:

- Office equipment – laptops, desktops and printers
- Camping equipment – tents, barbeques and trailers
- Gardening equipment – mowers, whipper snippers and ride-on mowers

If you are purchasing minor equipment, your application should identify who has control of the asset after the life of the project.

Can funding be used to cover remuneration costs for sole traders?

Yes, for eligible Aboriginal sole traders, up to 10% of the approved funding amount can be used to cover remuneration costs for the project.

What will not be funded?

Funding cannot be used for:

- costs for individual sporting teams or cultural groups to attend competitions or events
- capital costs – any type of building, construction, major equipment, or capital works including renovations to a building, housing related costs or the purchase of land
- purchase of vehicles
- wages and salaries and on-costs for ongoing staff
- sitting fees, travel allowance or costs associated with membership of boards/councils
- activities that may create an ongoing dependency on cultural grant funding, such as funding that is required over multiple years
- costs that are not directly associated with the delivery of the project
- activities related to NSW Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout, which has a separate funding program
- activities related to NAIDOC week events, which has a separate funding program
- international travel costs (proposals for domestic travel costs need to demonstrate the benefits of travel to the project, organisation, and community)
- operational and business as usual costs.
- Merchandise such as backpacks, gift vouchers, etc.

Should I include GST in my budget?

No, your budget in the application form should not include GST. Include the costs of all budget items without the GST that would be payable.

If your application is successful and your organisations or the auspice organisations 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.

It is the recipient organisation's responsibility to comply with any taxation liability that may arise in the delivery of the project. For more information, visit the [Australian Tax Office website](#).

Eligibility

Who can apply?

To be eligible you must be:

- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled, not-for-profit organisation working with Aboriginal communities in NSW, and one of the following organisation types:
 - 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; OR
- an Aboriginal sole trader or business whose primary business activity relates to cultural expression or revitalisation (noting projects must not be profit making in nature), OR
- an unincorporated Aboriginal community group with a not-for-profit auspice organisation of one of the following organisation types:
 - 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

Unincorporated Groups

If an unincorporated Aboriginal group wishes to apply under the 2023/2024 cultural grant program, they will need to partner with a not-for-profit organisation to receive and administer the funding. An organisation may only act as an auspice for one grant project in each round.

Who cannot apply?

- an individual
- non-Aboriginal groups or organisations (except for eligible auspice organisations auspicings an unincorporated Aboriginal community group)
- Federal and State Government agencies and bodies, including NSW public schools and hospitals
- unincorporated organisations or groups without an eligible auspicings organisation
- organisations that have not met project requirements, including acquitting and reporting for any grant funding received from Aboriginal Affairs NSW in the previous two years
- organisations with redress sanctions as described in the National Redress Scheme.

Can 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 an auspicing agreement with an eligible organisation.

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

Unincorporated groups must be Aboriginal community groups, that is, they must be led by Aboriginal people. If an unincorporated Aboriginal group wishes to apply for the Aboriginal Affairs NSW (AANSW) Cultural Grant, they will need to partner with an eligible auspice to receive and administer the funding.

Unincorporated Aboriginal groups that are unable to partner with an eligible auspice organisation should contact their nearest AANSW regional office to discuss the application.

Does an auspice have to be an ACCO?

No. Non-Aboriginal Organisations can auspice an unincorporated Aboriginal group.

Can an eligible Organisation auspice multiple ACCO's?

No. An organisation can act as an auspice for a maximum of one project in each Round.

I am an Aboriginal sole trader/small business, can I apply?

Yes. Aboriginal sole traders and businesses are eligible to apply for funding where your primary business activity relates to cultural expression or revitalisation.

Projects applied for under the AANSW Cultural Grants Program must not be profit-making in nature.

Are there any insurance requirements?

Yes. The applicant organisation must be covered by public liability insurance of up to \$10 million. The insurance cover must be valid for the entire duration of the project.

Alternatively, 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.

Applications process

What is the applications process?

Applicants are encouraged to contact their nearest Aboriginal Affairs NSW regional office to discuss their project.

To apply for funding, you will need to complete and submit the application form through our secure online grants system [SmartyGrants](https://aboriginalaffairs.smartygrants.com.au/) at <https://aboriginalaffairs.smartygrants.com.au/>

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

Applicants can also choose to submit a video response to application questions on project objectives

and outcomes. For more information on this option, please see 'Can I answer questions with a video or audio recording?'

What is SmartyGrants?

[SmartyGrants](#) is a user-friendly web-based grant management system. It allows AANSW to oversee the whole AANSW Cultural Grants Program online including the applications, grant management 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 (while SmartyGrants does try to ensure backwards compatibility with older versions, there may be some limitations):

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

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.

In case of any difficulty with the internet connection or SmartyGrants, please contact your nearest regional office, and staff will be happy to assist you with the technical requirements.

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, AANSW has a [Step-by-Step Guide](#) for applicants available on our website which includes a PDF version of the application form.

In addition, once you register in SmartyGrants 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. However, for your application to be considered you will need to be sure to submit it. When your application is ready to lodge click on the **Submit** button.

Can I answer questions with a video or audio recording?

Yes. You can choose to respond to questions about your project objective and outcomes by uploading a short video or audio recording of yourself or other members of your organisation reading the questions and answers aloud.

You can upload a single file or a separate file for each question.

You will still need to complete **mandatory questions** about your eligibility and organisation in the application form.

Do I need professional equipment to record my answers?

Responses can be filmed or recorded on a mobile phone, webcam, or portable video device. Professional editing or production is NOT required or expected.

AANSW staff are available to support you with recording and preparing a file for upload if required. Please contact your nearest regional office for assistance.

How do I record my answers on video or audio?

When planning to record your video or audio response think about:

- location and background
- equipment – mobile phone or computer camera
- style – are you answering the questions or is someone interviewing you?
- the quality – is it visually clear and easy to hear?
- practicing getting more comfortable and become more natural in front of the camera or microphone
- watching the video or listening to the recording and make notes on where you can improve or make more appropriate responses
- **Make sure you answer all the questions**

Can I review what I have written online?

Yes, before submitting your application you can 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 you

submit.

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

Yes, when you submit your application in SmartyGrants you will be sent a confirmation email confirming that your application has been received by AANSW.

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 later. 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 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 later. 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?

A Step-by-Step Guide is available to help you complete the application form. You can also get help by contacting the AANSW regional offices listed at the end of this document.

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

Bank account details are required at the application stage to reduce delays with payments.

You will need to complete a funding agreement and provide an invoice if your application is successful. AANSW will provide you with an invoice template showing the information required for us to process your payment and the funds will then be paid to your nominated bank account.

What questions will I be asked in the applications? Can I print them out first?

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

A copy of the application form can also be 'previewed' before you register or log into the [SmartyGrants](#) system.

What about our Aboriginal Cultural and Intellectual Property (ACIP)?

Aboriginal Affairs NSW (AANSW) has developed an Aboriginal Cultural and Intellectual Property (ACIP) Protocol that aims to build awareness and respect for Aboriginal culture.

The Protocol sets a standard for how AANSW engages with Aboriginal people and communities regarding their cultural and intellectual property and what we expect from the organisations we fund.

Any Aboriginal Cultural or Intellectual Property submitted in a grant application to AANSW remains the property of the relevant community organisation or Aboriginal person. AANSW will not distribute or communicate any ACIP contained in SmartyGrants and agrees to respect the cultural protocols of Aboriginal people to whom it may apply.

More information on ACIP, including the Protocol is available on the [AANSW website](#).

What happens after my application has been submitted?

Your application will be assessed for eligibility and if it is considered eligible it will then move to the next stage, which is the assessment of applications against the program's assessment criteria.

How will I find out the outcome?

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

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

Can I submit more than one application for funding?

An organisation can only receive one grant from the 2023-2024 Cultural Grants Program.

An eligible organisation may additionally act as an auspice for a maximum of one project in each Round.

If my application is unsuccessful, can I resubmit it during the next opening round?

Yes. Unsuccessful applicants can request a feedback session and may reapply for funding under the program during the opening period of the next round.

More information**Who do I contact for further information?**

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

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

Region/Office	Phone number
Illawarra Southern Batemans Bay	02 8575 1013
New England North-west Tamworth	02 8575 1172
Greater Northern Coffs Harbour	02 9566 8318
Murdi Paaki Broken Hill	02 9224 4877
Binaal Billa Dubbo	02 8575 1518 02 8575 1073
Hunter Central Coast Newcastle	02 8575 1680
Greater Sydney Sydney	1800 019 998