



Children and Parenting Support

Feedback summary

Overview

The Children and Parenting Support grants provide support and resources to children and their parents or carers based on an early intervention and prevention approach. They are for services that seek to identify issues that are, or could, impact on children and family outcomes and provide intervention or appropriate referral before these issues escalate.

Services to be funded by this round include:

- support playgroups
- community play groups
- parenting skills and support
- home visiting services
- peer support groups
- web-based services and resources
- school readiness programmes,

as well as other services which meet the programme objectives. School readiness, home visiting services and web-based service deliver are all new service types.

DSS recognises the important work of organisations providing children and parenting support and also has a strong commitment to improve the opportunities for children at risk.

Selection results

The Children and Parenting grant funding round was extremely competitive. The large number of applications received reflected the dedication of many organisations to providing these important support services for children and parents across Australia. While many of the proposals received were very strong, those selected met the selection criteria and demonstrated they would provide a comprehensive service mix accessible to the entire community. Additional details about strong and preferred proposals are included in this feedback.

Selection process

DSS received 880 applications for the Children and Parenting Support funding round.

DSS considered each proposal against four equally weighted selection criteria, listed below. Only organisations which rated highly in all aspects of the selection criteria were identified as preferred applicants.

The Department also emphasised that in responding to any of the selection criteria for funding rounds, applicants needed to provide evidence to support claims about how they meet each of the criteria. During the application process, the Department provided assistance for applicants in

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providing evidence including a fact sheet on the types of evidence that could be used for addressing selection criteria as well as guidance on what strong evidence looks like.

In determining the results of the round, DSS allocated half of the funding to 139 priority locations. This ensures that funding will be directed to the areas of the highest needs and allow support services to be rolled out in many regional communities which previously did not have a service presence. These priority locations were selected based on the following conditions:

- poor Australian Early Development Index scores
- high average populations of children under 14 years (19% of population or above)
- total population of children of at least 1000
- low Socio-Economic Index for Area rankings
- not currently in Communities for Children Facilitating Partner locations.

For the other half of the allocated funding, DSS considered the overall geographical spread of services and the importance of embedding a national approach to providing children and parenting support services.

Criteria 1: Demonstrate your understanding of the need for the funded activity in the chosen community and/or target group.

Successful applicants demonstrated a wide range of strengths in relation to Criteria 1, as shown in the table below.

Strength	Example
The applicant's target community was consistent with the Programme Guidelines.	The activity will target Indigenous children aged 0-12 and their parents.
The applicant provided evidence of a specific need in the target community.	Comprehensive demographic and statistical evidence of need was included.
The applicant was familiar with the services already available to the target community.	Available services were identified and relevant reports, studies and other evidence referenced.
The applicant's proposed activity will not duplicate existing Government services.	The proposal included evidence that the activity fills a clear service gap.
The applicant's service model was evidence-based and consistent with the Programme Guidelines.	Description of a service model focused on key life stages, early intervention and prevention, and identification of an evidence-based framework for that model.

Areas for improvement

Applicants could have strengthened their responses to Criteria 1 in a number of ways:

- demonstrating their understanding of the identified target community, service gap, and objectives of the funding round
- supporting their application with specific and relevant data (e.g. census, survey, academic or other research)
- ensuring the target community identified aligns with the Programme Guidelines Overview.

Criteria 2: Describe how the implementation of your proposal will achieve the activity objectives for all stakeholders, including value for money within the grant funding.

Successful applicants demonstrated a wide range of strengths in relation to Criteria 2, as shown in the table below.

Strength	Example
The applicant identified and demonstrated its capacity to achieve the activity objectives.	Discussion of activity objectives and implementation plan.
The applicant demonstrated its capacity to implement the activity within the proposed budget and deliver value for money.	Application provided a detailed budget which demonstrated how investment could efficiently achieve the funding outcomes, particularly through leveraging off other funding sources and existing infrastructure.
The applicant described thoughtful strategies for using its service delivery model to engage the target community.	Documented community engagement strategy.
The applicant demonstrated the potential sustainability of the service in the absence of a Children and Parenting Support grant.	Evidence of alternative sources of funding, current or prospective.

Areas for improvement

Applicants could have strengthened their responses to Criteria 2 in a number of ways:

- explicitly identifying and describing the connection between the activity and its expected outcomes
- providing documentation for consortium arrangements, including roles and responsibilities of consortium partners
- demonstrating value for money through the provision of a budget with information on the current or expected number of clients and the resultant outcome from services provided by the applicant.

Criteria 3: Demonstrate your experience in effectively developing, delivering, managing and monitoring activities to achieve the activity objectives for all stakeholders.

Successful applicants demonstrated a wide range of strengths in relation to Criteria 3, as shown in the table below.

Strength	Example
The organisation has demonstrated experience in developing and delivering activities to the target community.	Specific examples of similar activities developed and delivered for the target community or similar communities in the past.
The organisation had demonstrated experience managing programmes to achieve positive outcomes for stakeholders.	Results of previous evaluations.
The applicant validated its use of evidence-based approaches in previous activities.	Description of experience with early intervention and prevention approaches.
The organisation identified the positive outcomes of previous activities through the provision of programme evaluations.	Results from evaluations of current or previous programmes and activities.

Areas for improvement

Applicants could have strengthened their responses to Criteria 3 in a number of ways:

- demonstrating the outcomes of similar activities delivered to similar communities, including through the provision of previous programme evaluations
- providing specific examples of government funding received and administered in the past
- describing linkages with local networks and organisations that have ties to the target community.

Criteria 4: Demonstrate your organisation’s capacity and your staff capability (experience and qualifications) to deliver the activity’s objectives in the chosen community and/or target group.

Successful applicants demonstrated a wide range of strengths in relation to Criteria 4, as shown in the table below.

Strength	Example
The applicant provided relevant information on staff experience and qualifications.	Detailed descriptions of key positions and their roles in ensuring the effective delivery of the activity.
The applicant provided evidence of rigorous recruitment processes and selection criteria.	Detailed information on recruitment processes and selection criteria.
The organisation has mechanisms in place to train, support and develop staff.	Support mechanisms and training and development activities to which staff have access evidenced.
The organisation’s structure will support delivery of the activity.	Inclusion of detailed organisational chart highlighting capabilities.
The applicant had strong governance and quality assurance processes for the activity.	Deliverables and outcomes are clearly specified, with robust and established governance and quality assurance processes.

Areas for improvement

Applicants could have strengthened their responses to Criteria 4 in a number of ways:

- explaining how staff skills and experience translate to service delivery
- providing information on the resources and infrastructure available to support the delivery of services
- demonstrating their capacity to engage the target community in the design and delivery of services.

Further Feedback

To register to receive further feedback, please email grants@dss.gov.au providing all of the following details:

- Organisation name, as used on the application for funding (legal name or trading name, if different from the legal name);
- The Application ID issued by DSS upon receipt of the application for which feedback is sought;
- The name of the funding round(s) as per the application pack materials and application form (feedback for more than one funding application can be requested in the one email);
- A contact name and telephone number; and
- A contact email address.

To be eligible to receive feedback for the Children and Parenting Support round you must register by **Friday 13 February 2015**.

The Department will undertake to provide individual feedback to organisations within 12 weeks of the closing date for registrations. Please refer to the [DSS Feedback Policy](#) for more information.