

Part C: Application Information for the
National Disability Conference Initiative 2013 - 2014

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# Preface

The Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA or the Department) has a suite of documents (the Program Guideline Suite) which provide information relating to the program. They provide the key starting point for parties considering whether to participate in the program and form the basis for the business relationship between FaHCSIA and the funding recipient.

They are:

**Part A: Program Guidelines** which provides an overview of Program and the Activities relating to the program.

**Part B: Information for Applicants** which provides information on the Application, Assessment, Selection and Complaints processes; Financial and Funding Agreement arrangements.

**Part C: Application Information** providesspecific information on the Activity, Selection Criteria, Performance Management and Reporting. This part should be read in conjunction with the [Terms and Conditions of the Standard Funding Agreement.](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/grantsfunding/currentfunding/documents/funding_terms_conditions)

The **Application Form** which is completed by applicants applying for funding during a selection process.

FaHCSIA reserves the right to amend these documents from time to time by whatever means it may determine in its absolute discretion and will provide reasonable notice of these amendments.

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# Program Overview

**Disability and Carers**

The Australian Government helps to support people with disability, their families and carers, through the provision of income support payments and allowances (including Disability Support Pension, Carer Payment and Carer Allowance) and support services for people with disability and their carers.

The Services and Support for People with Disability Program provides support to people with disability, their families and carers, through grants and funding to organisations that deliver services for people with disability.

Under Services for People with Disability, the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) funds a number of services for people with disability and their carers, including supported employment services, advocacy, a national booking service for Auslan interpreting services, print disability services, respite services, services to make the community more accessible, supported accommodation for people with disability, leadership support for people with disability and outside school hours care for teenagers with disability.

The Government will continue to work with the states and territories on the design, governance and funding arrangements for the national roll-out of a National Disability Insurance Scheme through the Council of Australian Governments and the Select Council of Treasurers and Disability Ministers.

FaHCSIA is also continuing to work closely with the state and territory governments on key priority areas under the National Disability Agreement.

## Program Outcomes

To provide an adequate standard of living, improved capacity to participate economically and socially and manage life-transitions for people with disability and/or mental illness and carers through payments, concessions support and care services.

## Program Objective

To provide supported employment and improve access to information, advocacy and services for people with disability so they can develop their capabilities and actively participate in community and economic life.

## Program Component Objective

### Services for People with Disability

To provide social support and community based care for people with disability, their carers and their families, to promote independence, self reliance and participation in the community.

#  Overview of the National Disability Conference Initiative 2013-14

The National Disability Conference Initiative (NDCI) has been administered by FaHCSIA since 1999. Funding is provided to assist people with disability to attend disability conferences with a national focus held in Australia.

Eligible organisations may apply for funding of up to $12,000 for disability conferences with a national focus planned for 2013-14 to:

* Assist people with disability (or a family member or carer(s) attending to provide support) with the costs of attending conferences, e.g. conference fees, accommodation, travel; and/or
* Facilitate access to such conferences for people with disability (including a family member or carer(s) attending to provide support). For example by funding Auslan interpreters, live captioning services, hearing loops and/or note takers for people who are deaf or hearing impaired and/or other aids or appliances.

## Aims and objectives

The NDCI aims to assist eligible conference organisers to support the inclusion and maximise the participation of people with disability (including family members or carer(s) supporting them) at nationally focused disability conferences in Australia.

##  Service provider eligibility

Entities must be not-for-profit, non-government and the conference organiser in order to apply for funding for this activity.

The following entity types are eligible to apply for funding for this activity:

1. Incorporated Associations (incorporated under State/Territory legislation, commonly have 'Association' or 'Incorporated' or 'Inc' in their legal name);
2. Incorporated Cooperatives (also incorporated under State/Territory legislation, commonly have "Cooperative' in their legal name);
3. Companies (incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001);
4. Aboriginal Corporations (incorporated under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006); and
5. Organisations established through a specific piece of Commonwealth or State/Territory legislation (many public benevolent institutions, churches, universities, unions etc.).

## Participants

Participants are people with disability (or a family member or carer(s) providing support) who attend or participate in disability focused conferences held in Australia.

## Funding for the NDCI in 2013-14

In 2013-14, funding of $350,000 will be provided for the NDCI, under the Services and Support for People with Disability program. Eligible organisations may apply for funding of up to $12,000 per conference. Successful applicants may receive an offer for an amount smaller than the amount applied for.

Successful applicants will be offered a Funding Agreement. Funding can only be paid to organisations once they have signed the Funding Agreement and returned it to the Department.

Payment of the approved amount in the Funding Agreement will be made approximately six weeks prior to the date of the conference as advised in the Application Form.

Applications will be recommended for funding in order of ranking (as determined by their total score against the three selection criteria) until all available funding has been allocated. In the event that a successful applicant does not accept an offer of funding FaHCSIA will commence negotiations with alternate applicants based on the ranking determined by the selection process.

## Eligible and in-eligible activities

Activities that are eligible for funding under the Initiative are those that assist in meeting the costs of a person with disability (or a family member or carer(s) to provide support) to attend a disability conference with a national focus being held in Australia. These could include the costs of:

* transport to and from the conference;
* conference fees;
* accommodation during the conference; and/or
* assistance to improve access to, and participation in, the conference by people with disability, by providing interpreters or materials in alternative formats or other aids or appliances.

Funding may not be used for:

* a person without disability who is not a family member or recognised carer(s) who is attending to support a person with disability;
* conferences that do not have a disability focus, do not have a national focus, or are not held in Australia between 1 July 2013 and 30 June 2014;
* international travel;
* carer organisations hosting a carer or support worker focused conference, even if people with disability are attending;
* a person with disability to attend a non-disability focused conference;
* presenters/speakers without disability to present at a conference; and/or
* administrative costs such as advertising, telephone, printing/publishing, staff expenses, catering or venue hire.

If unsure, applicants should email disability@fahcsia.gov.au for further advice regarding activity eligibility.

## Activity performance and reporting

Funding recipients must provide FaHCSIA with a signed, one page statement within four weeks of their conference taking place, which includes:

* a brief summary of the conference outcomes; and
* verification that the funding provided by FaHCSIA was spent in accordance with the Funding Agreement.

# Application Process

## Overview of the Application Process

The 2013-14 NDCI application process will be an open competitive selection process.

Open competitive selection processes are open to all eligible organisations. The 2013-14 NDCI funding round will be advertised through metropolitan and regional newspapers, the FaHCSIA website, GrantsLINK and other online sources.

Applications will be accepted for one conference per organisation being held in Australia in any one financial year.

## Selection Criteria

The selection criteria have been designed to take into account the objectives of the NDCI and the skills and capabilities of organisations to hold relevant conferences. The equally weighted selection criteria are:

**1. Identification, attraction and support of conference participants**

How will your organisation ensure the identification, attraction and support of people with disability to the conference? Conference attendance may also be through video conferencing, Skype, video streaming/live broadcast*.*

*(Max 300 words)*

The following dot points are provided to assist you to develop your responses. They are suggestions only and you should add any further information that will assist us to assess your application.

* Provide examples of strategies you will implement to identify and include people with disability at your conference, including how appropriate support will be provided for those attending.
* Provide examples of how your organisation will prioritise potential recipients for support.
* Provide examples of how your organisation will work within networks, with other disability groups and the wider community and to best promote the conference.
* Estimate the number of people with disability you expect this funding will assist if your application is successful.

**2. Description of conference**

Describe your proposed conference, in particular its national disability focus.

(Max 300 words)

The following dot points are provided to assist applicants to develop their responses. They are suggestions only and you should add any further information that will assist us to assess your application.

* Elaborate on the disability focus of your conference, particularly the conference goals and anticipated outcomes.
* Elaborate on the national focus.
* How will people with disability benefit from attending?

**3. Experience/capability of organisation to deliver effectively within a budget** Describe your organisation’s demonstrated experience or capability in delivering within a proposed budget.

(Max 300 words)

The following is provided to assist applicants to develop their responses. They are suggestions only and you should add any further information that will assist us to assess your application.

* Describe how your organisation will manage the funding if your application is successful.

## How to submit an application

To apply for selection under this process, applicants must complete the Application Form and respond to the selection criteria as detailed above. Applications must be received by the closing date and time as detailed at Part 4.6.

The Department will not issue Application Forms or accept completed applications by fax or post.

Completed Application Forms must be submitted electronically to the Department using the ‘Submit Application’ function at Part 8 of the Application Form.

## Questions and Answers during the Application period

The Department will only respond to requests for information that seek clarification of issues to allow applicants to better understand the requirements of the Application Form and Program Guidelines.

Applicants must submit any questions in writing to disability@fahcsia.gov.au. Answers to questions will be updated regularly during the application period and will be available in a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document on the [FaHCSIA website](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/national-disability-conference-initiative-2013-14/pages/questions_answers).

Answers to questions received during the Application Period will be posted by 2.00 pm AEST every Thursday during the Application Period. Questions will not be taken or responded to after Tuesday
23 April 2013, or at any time during the assessment phase.

## Questions after the application period

The Department will not accept or respond to any applicant’s requests for information or correspondence about the status or progress of their application during the assessment phase.

##  Closing date and time

Applications can be submitted electronically at any stage during the application period but must be submitted by 2pm AEST Friday 26 April 2013.

Applications must be received by FAHCSIA within the application period to be considered.

## Application Acknowledgement

Applicants will receive a successful submission receipt once the Application Form is submitted. If you have provided a valid email address an email receipt will be generated confirming the Application Form has been successfully received by the Department.

Applications will be recommended for funding in order of ranking (as determined by their total score against the three selection criteria) until all available funding has been allocated. In the event that a successful applicant does not accept an offer of funding FaHCSIA will commence negotiations with alternate applicants based on the ranking determined by the selection process.

## Assessment

Applications will be equally divided amongst and assessed individually by an Assessment Team of three Assessors led by an Assessment Team Leader. Assessors will be drawn from FaHCSIA’s Disability and Carers Programs Branch, which is responsible for the administration of the NDCI. The Assessment Team will include individuals who collectively provide the expertise following on the NDCI and any issues affecting it.

Assessment Teams will undertake assessment of applications and will consider the applicant’s response to each Selection Criterion against a 6-point (0 to 5) scale (see Table below).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Rating** | **Score** |
| **Excellent quality**—excellent claims against the criteria, exceeds requirements, supporting information confirms superior performance. | 5 |
| **Very good quality**—very good claims against the criteria, meets all requirements to a high standard with complete/comprehensive supporting information. | 4 |
| **Good quality**—good claims against the criteria, meets all requirements with convincing supporting information. | 3 |
| **Adequate quality**—adequate claims against the criteria, mostly meets requirements, but may be lacking detail and/or supporting information. | 2 |
| **Marginal or poor quality** — poor claims against the criteria, does not meet requirements, has deficient supporting information. | 1 |
| Does not meet or address criteria, or no response.  | 0 |

Assessment Teams will assess applications primarily on the information provided in the Application Form.

FaHCSIA may use information about an applicant that is, or becomes known to FaHCSIA in the course of FaHCSIA’s business, as well as any publicly available information.

Assessors may use information from any area of the application form when assessing a particular criterion. While assessors will assess applications primarily on the basis of the information provided in the applications, as part of the assessment process, they may use, subject to probity and privacy rules:

* information obtained about the applicants by FaHCSIA in the course of managing other current Funding Agreements; and/or
* information that is available on the public record, i.e. an applicant’s website or the Australian Business Register website (ABNs).

All selection criteria are equally weighted. For each application they are responsible for, assessors will allocate a score to each criterion based on the rating scale above. Assessors will then sum each criterion score to determine a total score for the application out of 15. Applications that do not receive a rating of at least 2 against all three criteria will not be considered suitable for NDCI funding.

Applications will also be assessed to identify the applicants that can deliver the ‘best value in social service delivery’ or, value for money. This means the delivery of an optimum combination of quality and cost with minimal risk to the Australian Government. Best value does not mean monetary value alone or lowest cost.

Quality Assurance will be conducted throughout the assessment by the Assessment Team leader to ensure scoring across applications is consistent. Once all applications have been assessed, they will be ranked from highest to lowest. At the end of the assessment phase the Assessment Team will provide an Assessment Report.

Should a conflict of interest occur during the selection process (i.e. an assessor becomes aware that they have a relationship with an applicant or has previously worked for an applying organisation), they must declare the matter to the Assessment Team Leader prior to allocating any ratings.

A management strategy for the conflict of interest will be established and documented by the Assessment Team Leader and submitted to the Delegate for approval. If the conflict of interest is too great to overcome through a management strategy, the Assessment Team Leader will recommend to the Delegate that the assessor be replaced. All documentation about conflicts of interest and approved management strategies will be kept on file.

## Announcement Strategy

All applicants will be advised of the selection process outcome by email. Successful applicants will then be sent a Funding Agreement via post. The outcome of the selection process may also be announced via a media release and will be published on the [FaHCSIA website](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au).

# Contact information

Website: [www.fahcsia.gov.au](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au)

Email: disability@fahcsia.gov.au