



Emergency Relief

Feedback summary

Overview

Emergency Relief grants help people address immediate basic needs in time of financial crisis. They do so by providing people experiencing financial hardship or distress with valuable access to aid and support: access and support that they likely could not access otherwise.

The aims of emergency relief include organisations:

- assisting people to deal with their immediate crisis situation
- delivering services in a way that maintains the dignity of individuals and families
- referring consumers to other sources of support and assistance
- encouraging self-reliance.

DSS recognises and supports the work of the civil society organisations delivering emergency relief. These services are critically important in terms of support and material aid for Australians in crisis. The organisations that deliver these services have deep experience in the sector and strong commitment to providing high quality emergency relief services.

Grant results

The preferred applicants demonstrated excellent and diverse approaches to emergency relief and will provide critical services for Australians in financial hardship or distress to access aid and support. Overall, however, applications were of a very high standard of quality across all selection criteria making the round highly competitive. There are evidently a wide range of providers skilled and able to offer these important services.

Selection process

DSS received 537 applications for the Emergency Relief funding round.

DSS considered each proposal against five equally weighted selection criteria which are 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 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.

Applicants seeking funding under this selection process also had to meet the following requirements at 30 June 2014:

- be delivering emergency relief services (as defined in the Financial Wellbeing and Capability Guidelines Overview) and be funded by one or more of the following – Commonwealth/ State/ Territory/ Local government) or
- be delivering emergency relief services (as defined in the Financial Wellbeing and Capability Guidelines Overview) and be registered as a Charity and/or Charity, with the subtype Public Benevolent Institution, under the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.

Through this selection process, DSS also considered an equitable distribution of funding across geographical areas according to need.

This feedback document details the strengths and areas for improvement of proposals against each of the selection criteria.

Criteria 1: Demonstrate your understanding of the need for the funded activity in the chosen community/communities

Strong applicants demonstrated key strengths in relation to Criteria 1, as shown in the table below.

Strength	Example
The applicant identified and demonstrated a good understanding of the target community.	Identified the expected consumers accessing emergency relief – consumers with low, or no, income or low financial literacy skills and/or difficulty living within their means.
The applicant was familiar with the services available to the target community as well as potential service gaps.	Current emergency relief services available and service gaps identified and relevant reports, studies and other evidence referenced.
The applicant demonstrated the importance of a particular service gap.	Knowledgeable discussion of service gap for emergency relief services such as minimal access to material and financial aid and its impact on the target community.

Areas for improvement

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

- demonstrating an understanding of the identified target community, service gap, and objectives of the funding round
- supporting their proposal with specific and relevant data (e.g. census, survey, academic or other research)
- demonstrating an understanding of emergency relief and delivery of emergency relief services.

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.

Strong applicants demonstrated key strengths in relation to Criteria 2, as shown in the table below.

Strength	Example
The applicant clearly described the activity to be conducted.	Provided a comprehensive description of the immediate crisis assistance and all of its constituent elements.
The applicant provided a clear plan for the implementation of the activity.	Proposal provided an implementation plan for delivery of referral services.
The applicant's proposed activity will help to build resilience and self-management skills in the target community.	Provided a comprehensive description of a client-focussed, wrap-around service that encourages self-reliance.
The proposal represented value for money.	Proposal provided a detailed budget and involved collaborating with other organisations to provide emergency relief services.

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
- demonstrating value for money through the provision of a budget which outlines the investment required and how the services can be efficiently delivered.

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

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

Strength	Example
The organisation had demonstrated experience in developing and delivering similar activities to the target community or similar communities.	Specific examples of similar assessment and referral activities developed and delivered for the target community or similar communities in the past.
The applicant demonstrated strong experience of monitoring and continuous improvement.	Details of experiences of reporting, measurement, evaluation systems and quality assurance were included.
The applicant had previously received and effectively administered government funding in the past.	Details of funding previously received and outcomes achieved, demonstrating capacity to meet reporting and funding requirements.
The applicant proposed comprehensive strategies for risk management, prioritising needs, and involving stakeholders in service design and delivery.	Detailed description of risk management and stakeholder engagement strategies already in place in the organisation.

Areas for improvement

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

- demonstrating outcomes of similar activities delivered to similar communities
- providing specific examples of government funding received and administered in the past
- describing key stakeholders and their involvement in the activity.

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

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

Strength	Example
The organisation’s structure will support delivery of the activity.	Organisation structured against different emergency relief service offerings.
The applicant had strong governance processes for the activity.	Deliverables and outcomes are clearly specified, with roles and responsibilities for meeting deliverables identified.
The organisation has mechanisms in place to train, support and develop staff.	Details of support mechanisms and training and development activities to which staff have access.

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
- specifically addressing objectives of the funding round.

Criteria 5: Describe and demonstrate a service delivery model that includes effective partnerships, linkages and referral pathways that directly contribute to the activity outcomes.

Strong applicants demonstrated a range of strengths in relation to Criteria 5, as shown in the table below.

Strength	Example
The applicant demonstrated its ability to establish productive relationships and linkages in and for the benefit of the target community.	Examples of existing partnerships and linkages and their contribution to better financial and support outcomes for the target community.
The applicant’s proposed activity complements other services available to the target community, from both their own organisation and other organisations.	Description of plan to refer clients to existing emergency relief or support services, when possible, to avoid duplicating effort.
The applicant demonstrated potential for their service delivery model to contribute to the objectives of the funding round.	Clear description of links between the service delivery model and objectives of the funding round to assist people to deal with their immediate crisis situation and refer consumers to other sources of support and assistance.

Areas for improvement

Applicants could have strengthened their responses to Criteria 5 in a number of ways:

- providing information on the client pathway (i.e. through referral, service, and referral to other services)
- demonstrating understanding of emergency relief as an entry point for other, more long-term focussed services
- displaying sensitivity to the culture of the target community.

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 Emergency Relief 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.