



Australian Government

Department of Social Services

Families and Communities Program

**Settlement Services Guidelines
Overview**

September 2016

Preface

The Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS) has a suite of Program Guidelines which provides information about each Program that provides grants funding, and the suite of Activities that contribute to that Program. They provide the key starting point for parties considering whether to participate in a Program and form the basis for the business relationship between DSS and the grant recipient

DSS recognises and supports the work of civil society organisations. The DSS approach to working with civil society is based on reducing red tape, providing greater flexibility and respecting the independence of the sector. This approach recognises that civil society organisations should be supported to self-manage the delivery of support to our communities rather than being burdened with unnecessary government requirements.

Program Guidelines are provided to applicants for each grant funding round. The approach to grants funding described in the Guidelines aims to foster collaboration and innovation in the community across civil society freeing up resources to improve outcomes for individuals, families and communities.

The Program Guidelines for each grant funding round include:

- a Program Guidelines Overview document (this document) that provides an overview of how funding rounds may be conducted for each Activity (Portfolio Budget Statement administered line item) that contribute to the overall Program outcome, and
- an Application Pack - a suite of documents with information specific to each grant funding round conducted within the Activity.

The simplified Program arrangements establish the framework for the Department to move towards a single Grant Agreement per provider, implement new and improved financial reporting systems, reduce reporting and regulation, consolidate funding rounds and support greater service delivery innovation to meet the needs of clients.

DSS 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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Version Control

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V1.0	Pre August 2015	Department of Finance (DOFD) approved.
V2.0	8 September 2015	Updates to reflect changes in Settlement Grants Sub-Activities. DOFD / PM&C approved.
V2.1	September 2016	

1. Program Overview – Families and Communities

1.1 Program outcomes

The Department of Social Services (DSS) funds organisations to develop and maintain a cohesive Australian community and improved independence.

The Families and Communities Program aims to support families, improve children's wellbeing and increase participation of vulnerable people in community life to enhance family and community functioning.

The following seven Activities make up the Program and support the Commonwealth Government's priorities and responsibilities:

- Financial Wellbeing and Capability
- Families and Children
- Strengthening Communities
- Settlement Services
- Civil Society
- Families and Communities Service Improvement, and
- National Initiatives.

1.2 Program objectives

The Families and Communities Program aims to strengthen relationships, support families, improve children's wellbeing and increase the participation in community life to strengthen family and community functioning, and reduce the costs of family breakdown. The Program will provide a range of services, focussed on strengthening relationships, and building parenting and financial management skills, providing support for better community connections, as well as services to help newly arrived migrants in their transition to life in Australia

The Program also aims to provide a foundation for integrated, community led program delivery that understands and meets local needs and promotes innovation and collaboration. This will include the establishment of a platform for continued improvement in the way DSS does its business, clarifying and strengthening Commonwealth and state/territory government responsibilities and fostering stronger relationships with civil society and partnering with service providers.

The Program will provide a range of services, predominantly focussed on early intervention, prevention, and support, including assistance for relationship breakdown.

These services will be provided to families, children, young people, volunteers, multicultural communities, humanitarian entrants, migrants and other individuals with special circumstances.

2 Activity Overview – Settlement Services

For refugee and humanitarian entrants, Settlement Services builds upon the foundation services provided by Humanitarian Settlement Services, by delivering services that assist eligible clients to become fully-functioning members of society. As a consequence, the Activity promotes social cohesion and productive diversity within the Australian community.

2.1 Aims and objectives

The broad aim of the Settlement Services Activity is to deliver services which assist eligible clients to become self-reliant and participate equitably in Australian society, with a focus on fostering social participation, economic well-being, independence, personal well-being and community connectedness.

2.2 Sub-Activities

2.2.1 Settlement Grants

Settlement Grants delivers core settlement support for humanitarian entrants and other eligible migrants in their first five years of life in Australia. It aims to assist eligible clients to become self-reliant and participate equitably in Australian society, while maximising the productivity of our diversity and the economic and social well-being of clients by enabling them to become fully-functioning members of society as soon as possible. These services also assist to minimise longer-term reliance on social services.

Providers funded under the Settlement Grants sub-activity must ensure that clients are given the opportunity to communicate their needs in the language of their choice, including through professional interpreters where necessary.

The Settlement Grants sub-activity has four components:

Casework/coordination and settlement service delivery

Casework services involve the provision of settlement related information, advice, advocacy or referral services to individuals or families either on request or as assessed as required due to issues arising from the client's settlement experience. This may include a needs assessment and/or the development of individual case plans and/or support for clients referred from Humanitarian Settlement Services. This service type can include programs that assist clients to become 'job ready' by building capabilities in employment and education.

Settlement service delivery and coordination typically include but are not limited to information sessions teaching life skills and/or information on employment issues, police and the law, banking practices, tenancy rights and responsibilities and the health system, homework support programs and/or other activity-based groups.

Community coordination and development

Some new arrivals need assistance to make social connections – for example, new arrivals with low levels of English proficiency, from small and establishing communities, the elderly and those settling in rural areas. Additionally, new and emerging community groups may need leadership, mentoring and advocacy support to link with mainstream employment, education, English language and other mainstream services in order to become self-sustaining as soon as possible. Targeted support provided by Settlement Services grants assists to maximise productive diversity and social cohesion.

Under these grants, services may include but are not limited to providing a brokerage role for government agencies to assist new arrivals connect with their services, working in partnerships with establishing communities and the local neighbourhood to build self-reliance, working in local neighbourhoods to support local services and provide a welcoming environment for new arrivals and supporting newly arrived community leaders and organisations to develop self-supporting skills.

Youth settlement services

Newly arrived young migrants, including refugee young people, can face significant challenges in their settlement including acquiring English language skills, finding jobs, entering formal schooling, moving between cultures, finding housing and connecting to and navigating mainstream services. Newly arrived young people benefit from a more targeted service delivery approach from providers who can offer specialised and customised services to help young people from diverse backgrounds. For the purposes of the Settlement Services Activity, youth are defined as people between the ages of 15 and 24 years.

Youth settlement services include but are not limited to developing programs that build capabilities in employment, education, leadership, social skills and linking to the local community, developing innovative approaches to engage young refugees and migrants, providing a brokerage role for mainstream and other government agencies by fostering connections with refugee and migrant youth and their families, and homework support programs.

Support for ethno-specific communities

Ethno-specific organisations play a crucial role in the settlement of newly arrived migrants and refugees, as they understand the immediate needs of new arrivals and have ready access to networks through which new arrivals can be identified, contacted and supported. Some relatively new communities may lack 'critical mass' to develop information networks and maximise social inclusion and participation. Settlement Services provide targeted support in these areas, including services that can refer new entrants to existing support groups and services, local sporting organisations, social clubs and parents and citizens groups.

2.2.2 Peak Bodies – Settlement Services

Peak bodies and advocacy groups play an important role in representing the settlement and community sectors to government. Peak body services include but are not limited to providing advice on policy and program development, advocacy, sharing information and best practice across the sector and promotion of issues on behalf of members

2.2.3 Youth Transition Support - Pilot Program 1 January 2016 – 30 June 2017

The Commonwealth Government allocated \$22.1 million in the 2015-16 Federal Budget for the Transition Support for Young Refugees and Other Vulnerable Young Migrants Budget Measure. The measure will pilot a program of targeted, early intervention assistance to young humanitarian entrants and other vulnerable young migrants under 25 to participate in education and make successful transitions to employment.

The Youth Transition Support sub-activity builds on services provided under the Settlement Grants Youth Settlement Services component to address disengagement and marginalisation, and promote social cohesion in locations of high need. Providers will deliver a suite of services that provide early intervention assistance and addresses barriers to participation in education and employment that are specific to young humanitarian entrants and other vulnerable young migrants under 25.

The Youth Transition Support sub-activity has four components:

Partnerships for employment

Services will support eligible clients to transition into continual employment. This will be achieved through work placement opportunities and projects/services to improve work readiness and workplace awareness, gain work experience and fill existing job vacancies. This component will be delivered in partnerships/consortia with employers, *jobactive* providers and other related supports.

Increased vocational opportunities

Services will provide pathways to industry recognised vocational training and work experience, and vocational skills recognition, to help eligible clients achieve sustainable employment outcomes. This will be achieved through partnerships including with TAFEs, registered training organisations and engaged employers, to strengthen and obtain vocational skills.

Strong connections to education

Services will support eligible clients to stay engaged with education. This component will help eligible clients through projects that support them to complete their studies, build their self-confidence and knowledge and increase self-confidence and peer connections.

Sports engagement for youth

Services will fund sporting activities to help eligible clients participate in sporting activities to build social connections, overcome isolation and increase participation with other young Australians beyond their own communities.

The pilot is limited to a number of high need locations, and providers will be chosen through a direct selection process.

2.2.4 Career Pathways

The Commonwealth Government allocated \$5.2 million in the 2016-2017 Federal Budget for a career pathways pilot for humanitarian entrants. The pilot will provide targeted, early intervention assistance to help newly arrived humanitarian entrants who have skills and/or qualifications and vocational English language proficiency.

Pilot participants will receive assistance to develop and pursue a career pathway plan which will guide them in sourcing and securing meaningful employment opportunities appropriately suited to their pre-arrival work history, qualifications and/or skills. The targeted assistance will comprise wrap-around support focussed on helping them to achieve the goals identified in their career pathways plan.

Services provided through the pilot will complement employment assistance already available to job seekers in Australia.

2.3 Applicant eligibility

The following entity types meet the eligibility requirements to be invited to apply for a grant for the Settlement Services Activity:

- a. Incorporated Associations (incorporated under state/territory legislation, commonly have 'Association' or 'Incorporated' or 'Inc.' in their legal name)
- b. Incorporated Cooperatives (also incorporated under state/territory legislation, commonly have 'Cooperative' in their legal name)
- c. Companies (incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* – must be registered as a not-for-profit)
- d. Organisations established through a specific piece of Commonwealth or state/territory legislation (public benevolent institutions, churches, universities, unions etc.)
- e. Partnerships
- f. Trustees on behalf of a Trust, and
- g. Local Government.

Only not-for profit entities are eligible to apply for Settlement Services grants.

For-profit entity types specified above may be invited in special circumstances.

2.4 Participants/clients/recipients/target group

2.4.1 Settlement Grants

To ensure Settlement Grants components are directed to those most in need, services are directed to those permanent residents who have arrived in Australia in the last five years as:

- humanitarian entrants
- family stream migrants with low English proficiency, and
- dependants of skilled migrants in rural and regional areas with low English proficiency.

Also included in the target group are:

- selected temporary residents (Prospective Marriage, Provisional Partner, visa holders and their dependants) in rural and regional areas who have arrived in the last five years and who have low English proficiency, and
- newly arrived communities which require assistance to develop their capacity to organise, plan and advocate for services to meet their own needs and which are still receiving significant numbers of new arrivals.

Other provisional or temporary visa holders are not eligible for services funded under the Settlement Grants sub-activity.

Temporary entrants, such as skilled entrants or students, enter Australia for a specific and time-limited purpose and are expected to be supported by their sponsors or make their own provision for

employment, accommodation, access to health and other services while they are temporarily in Australia.

2.4.2 Youth Transition Support

The target group for this sub-activity is young refugees and other vulnerable migrants eligible for Settlement Grants (as above) under the age of 25, who reside in specified delivery locations.

2.4.3 Career Pathways

The target group for this sub-activity is newly arrived humanitarian entrants, including those that have been in Australia for less than five years, of working age, with skills and/or qualifications and vocational-level English language proficiency.

2.5 Funding for the Activity

An amount of \$224.60 million has been allocated over six years from 1 July 2015 by the Australian Government for the Settlement Services Activity¹. This includes \$20 million in administered funding to deliver the Youth Transition Support sub-activity in 2015-16 and 2016-17; \$0.275 million additional funding for Peak Bodies Settlement Services sub-activity in 2015-16 and 2016-17; \$15.9 million for Settlements Grants sub-activity in 2015-16 and 2016-17; \$5.2 million to deliver Career Pathways sub-activity from 2016-17 to 2018-19. All amounts are GST exclusive.

Funding amounts are inclusive of discretionary grants awarded under this Program Guidelines Overview document and funding provided through other process such as procurement. Funding amounts included in the Program Guidelines Overview are estimates and may change in the course of the budget year as government priorities change.

The Minister for Social Services has overall responsibility for the Settlement Services Activity.

Where DSS has invited applications for grants, the final decision about service delivery areas, sites and proposals for service delivery will be made by the Departmental delegate.

DSS may negotiate grant agreements ranging up to a five year term based on the grant purpose, degree of risk, and priorities for funding.

As part of the Settlement Services Activity, organisations may choose to use up to 10% of their funding for innovative projects. This will be negotiated as part of the Grant Agreement. Funding for the Settlement Services Activity is notionally distributed across states and territories based on target group arrival numbers of the last five years. Priority is given to humanitarian entrant populations and rural and regional settlement locations.

Funded organisations are required to enter into a legally binding funding agreement with DSS, which specifies a range of contractual obligations, including in relation to record keeping and retention, performance reporting and financial expenditure and acquittal.

In accordance with the Fair Work Australia decision of 1 February 2012 to increase wages in the Social and Community Services (SACS) sector, the Department of Social Services will provide supplementation funding to organisations employing SACS workers delivering MMS. To be eligible for supplementation funding organisations must be delivering in-scope Australian Government funded programs and have employed staff under the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 (SACS Modern Award), specifically under one of the following Schedules:

- Schedule B – Classification Definitions - Social and Community Services Employees; and
- Schedule C – Classification Definitions - Crisis Accommodation Employees.

¹ This figure is for Settlement Services grants only. The figure shown in the 2015-16 Portfolio Budget Statement of \$655.559 million for Settlement Services over the forward estimates period is inclusive of non-grant initiatives.

Organisations affected by the Western Australia Industrial Relation Commission (WAIRC) SACS Decision of 29 August 2013 may also be entitled to SACS supplementation.

The amount of funding under the Settlement Services Activity offered may be less than the amount requested in your application. In such cases, organisations will be asked to revise their budget and negotiate a work program in line with the funding offered.

2.6 Eligible and ineligible activities

The grant may be used for:

- staff salaries and on-costs which can be directly attributed to the provision of the Settlement Services Activity in the identified service area or areas as per the grant agreement
- employee training for paid and unpaid staff including Committee and Board members, that is relevant, appropriate and in line with the Settlement Services Activity
- operating and administration expenses directly related to the delivery services, such as:
 - telephones
 - rent and outgoings
 - computer / IT/website/software
 - insurance
 - utilities
 - postage
 - stationery and printing
 - accounting and auditing
 - travel/accommodation costs, and
 - assets as defined in the Terms and Conditions, including motor vehicle purchase or lease.

Grants are not provided for:

- purchase of land
- major capital expenditure
- the covering of retrospective costs
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation
- major construction/capital works
- subsidy of general ongoing administration costs such as electricity, phone and rent of an organisation
- overseas travel
- activities which are the responsibility of other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies, e.g. health care, childcare and English language tuition
- specialist counselling services, e.g. torture and trauma counselling
- multicultural events and festivals (these can be applied for under Strengthening Communities grants)
- services which duplicate those delivered by Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) or Complex Case Support (CCS), and
- services predominantly focused on social cohesion (refer to the Department's Strengthening Communities Activity).

2.7 Activity links and working with other agencies and services

Effective links with other agencies and services provide the opportunity to raise awareness broadly and on specific issues. Where appropriate and relevant to the funded Settlement Services Activity, grant recipients are encouraged to strengthen service networks, including linkages and partnerships with other agencies, services and communities, to help deliver responsive and integrated services that meet local needs and builds cooperative relations.

2.8 Specialist requirements (e.g. Legislative requirements)

Grant recipients must comply with all relevant Commonwealth and state/territory legislation and regulations, including, but not limited to:

- *The Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) in performing the obligations outlined in the Grant Agreement*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*
- *The Copyright Act 1968 (the Act) in regards to undertaking the activity*
- *The Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Commonwealth) (FOI Act)*
- Any applicable Occupational Health and Safety and Equal Employment Opportunity laws.

Australia's *Multicultural Access and Equity Policy: Respecting diversity. Improving responsiveness* obliges Australian government agencies to ensure that cultural and linguistic diversity is not a barrier for people engaging with government and accessing services to which they are entitled, for example, by providing access to language services where appropriate. Grant applicants should consider whether services, projects, activities or events may require the use of professional translating or interpreting services in order to communicate with non-English speakers. If required, based on an assessment of the target group, costs for translating and interpreting services should be factored into grant applications. For further information on the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy please refer to [the DSS website](#).

2.9 Information technology

Settlement Services Activity grant recipients must have systems* in place to allow them to meet their data collection and reporting obligations outlined in their Schedule.

Performance information (e.g. client characteristics and service delivery information) will be required to be collected by service providers at the client level and entered directly into the department's client data capture system, its predecessor or via a DSS approved alternative mechanism.

Where collection of client level data is not appropriate for instance due to the activity involving a large group, aggregate reporting will be permitted.

The Data System protocols and requirements are available at www.dss.gov.au.

The new application will:

- Be a web based portal
- Allow submission of data through external approved third party applications, and
- Support submission of data through other approved methods.

Performance information required to be collected may include (but is not limited to):

- Client content (where required)
- Client identity characteristics
- Client demographic characteristics
- Service delivery information, and
- Client outcomes.

*Please Note there are no minimum Information Technology requirements for grant recipients.

2.10 Activity performance and reporting

DSS monitors and evaluates program performance to ensure activities and grant recipients have a focus on outcomes for beneficiaries through effective and efficient use of funds and resources.

DSS's Performance Indicators focus on three key questions:

1. Are we achieving what we expected?
2. How well is it being done?
3. How much is being done?

Performance Indicators based on these questions may be included in the grant agreement for the grants recipients.

Grant recipient performance will be measured against benchmarking of other organisations funded for this program and compares a grant recipient's service delivery performance against national

benchmarks. Benchmarking will take into consideration the delivery of similar services, scale of funding, locality of service location and other relevant characteristics.

Information needed to evaluate service delivery/project performance, must be reported via the DSS approved mechanisms outlined in the grant agreement with DSS.

Full details of reporting requirements will be listed in the grant agreement for each grant recipient.

2.11 Financial reporting

The Settlement Services Activity will be managed to ensure the efficient and effective use of public monies. This will be consistent with best value in social services principles; the DSS grant agreement and will aim to maintain viable services and act to prevent fraud upon the Commonwealth.

Acquittal documents must be provided to DSS as outlined in the grant agreement.

Funding must only be used for the purposes for which it was provided.

2.12 DSS responsibilities and accountabilities under the Activity

The Minister for Social Services has overall responsibility for the Families and Communities Program.

DSS will:

- meet the Governments terms and conditions of the grant agreement established with organisations
- ensure that services provided under the Settlement Services Activity are accountable to the Australian Government under the terms and conditions agreed in the grant agreement
- administer the operation of the Settlement Services Activity in a timely manner
- identify suitable providers to deliver the activities required as per the grant agreement
- work in partnership with the provider to ensure the Settlement Services Activity is implemented and will provide the service provider with constructive feedback, and
- ensure that the outcomes contained within the Program Guidelines Overview are being met and evaluate the provider's performance against the Settlement Services Activity outcomes, and
- information on the successful grants will be published on the [DSS website](#) within the required timeframes.

2.13 Grant recipients responsibilities and accountabilities under the Activity

In entering into a grant agreement with DSS, the grant recipient must comply with all requirements outlined in the suite of documents that comprise the agreement including these Program Guidelines, the grant agreement and the [General Grant Conditions](#).

Grant recipients are responsible for ensuring:

- the general Grant Conditions of the grant agreement are met
- service provision is effective, efficient, and appropriately targeted
- highest standards of duty of care are applied
- services are operated in line with, and comply with the requirements as set out within all state and territory and Commonwealth legislation and regulations
- Indigenous Australians have equal and equitable access to services
- they work collaboratively to deliver the Settlement Services Activity, and
- contributing to the overall development and improvement of the Settlement Services Activity such as sharing best practice.

2.14 Risk management strategy

All DSS grant agreements are managed according to their level of risk. Organisations will be subject to a Provider Capacity Risk Assessment prior to the negotiation of grant agreements. Organisations may also be required to participate in a Financial Viability Assessment during the Assessment process of an application. A periodic monitoring process is undertaken during the term of an agreement which monitors service delivery and is used to provide evidence for ongoing risk assessments.

2.15 Special conditions applying to this Activity

Not applicable.

3 Application Process

3.1 Overview of the application process

All grant processes will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Commonwealth Grant Guidelines and will be for purposes that are consistent with the objectives and priorities of the Settlement Services Activity.

3.2 Program Guidelines Overview

Applicants for grants funding rounds conducted for this Activity will be provided with the Program Guidelines suite of documents comprising:

- the Program Guidelines Overview (this document), and
- an Application Pack - a suite of documents with information specific to each grant funding round conducted within the Activity.

Application Pack

The Application Pack will comprise the following documents:

Selection Funding Round Summary

This document includes the following information

- objectives and requirements of the funding round
- the type of selection process being used
- opening and closing dates
- the value of the funding round
- how to submit an application
- selection criteria, and
- eligibility criteria.

Application Form

This document asks you to address selection criteria relating to the particular funding round you are applying for and also requires you to complete general information about you as the provider applying for funding.

DSS Streamlined Grant Agreement template – General Grant Conditions

The signed Grant Agreement will include information relating to the Grant objectives, the activities to be undertaken, the duration of the grant, payment, reporting requirements, supplementary terms and conditions, and signatures of DSS and providers.

Applicants for funding rounds may also be provided with the following additional information as part of the Application pack including:

Questions and Answers

This document aims to answer any questions and provide additional information relating to the activity and the application process for each individual activity that you are applying for funding. This will include operational guidelines if applicable.

3.3 Achieving value for money

In assessing the extent to which the application represents value for money, DSS will have regard to the following:

- the relative merit of each application
- the overall objective/s to be achieved in providing the funding
- the relative cost of the proposal, or of elements of the proposal
- the extent to which the applicant has demonstrated a capacity to fund the proposal taking into consideration all possible sources of finance, including debt finance
- the geographic location of the proposal, and
- the extent to which the evidence in the application demonstrates that the proposal will be located in a community with one or more of the following features:
 - the community is identified as a priority community by DSS
 - the community has high levels of the target population or of a special needs group
 - the community has high population growth in the target population or has anticipated high population growth in the target population.

3.4 Choice of selection process

When undertaking a selection process DSS will consider the proportionality of scale, nature, funding amount, complexity and risks involved in the funding round. DSS will consider proportionality to inform the choice of the application and selection process, the type of grant agreement to be used and the reporting and acquittal requirements.

The Settlement Services Activity funds a diverse range of service types and other activities. Due to the size and complexity of the Settlement Services Activity, access to funding will be available through a variety of means and at various times throughout the funding period. DSS proposes to undertake a mix of the following selection processes to achieve the objectives and priorities for the Settlement Services Activity.

Open competitive selection process

An open competitive selection process is open to all providers operating in the market place. Open processes are advertised through the media, the DSS website and other sources in order to attract as much interest as possible. Open competitive grant rounds have open and closed nominated dates, with eligible applications being assessed against the nominated selection criteria.

Restricted competitive selection process

A restricted (or targeted) selection process is used where there are few providers available due to highly specialised services being required, there are geographical considerations, specific expertise is required or there are time constraints. A restricted grant round is still competitive, but only opens to a small number of potential grant recipients based on the specialised requirements of the granting activity or project under consideration. Potential grant recipients are invited to apply and will still need to be assessed against nominated selection criteria.

Direct selection process

A direct selection process is a closed non-competitive process, where an approach is made directly to an existing, high performing provider to expand their current service delivery activities or deliver new services. It involves assessment of a provider's capacity to deliver an expanded service or capability to deliver a new service through use of selection criteria and/or an assessment of a provider's current performance.

Expressions of Interest (EOI) process

DSS may call for EOIs to test the market to ascertain the extent of potential applicants. An EOI will be advertised as the first in a two stage process. The second stage involves applicants selected through the EOI process applying in either a targeted or direct process.

DSS may advertise any funding process:

- in major national newspapers and other selected newspapers
- on the [DSS website](#), and
- on the [Government grants website](#).

Any advertisement will inform potential applicants of where to obtain application information for the relevant process. Processes will be provided on the DSS website under the Grants tab.

DSS from time to time may conduct a direct selection in the event that there is a change in government policy, a shift in demographics, unforeseen circumstances or due to service provider failure.

3.5 Service delivery areas

It is expected that if a service area changes, the grant recipient will be able to meet the cost of delivering the Activity in the revised area through its own efficiencies and within the funding provided.

Service delivery areas or catchment areas designated within the grant agreement must not change without prior written agreement from DSS. However, grant recipients are encouraged to monitor demographic changes in their broader region and discuss varying their catchment areas with DSS if this helps address an emerging need not being met in that area. Where service delivery areas or catchment areas require definition, this will be provided in the Application Pack.

DSS may also, at its discretion, facilitate flexible grants in circumstances where grant recipients have met grant agreement requirements within a specified service area and wish to reallocate all or part of any remaining funds to another service they are funded to deliver in another service delivery area under the same grant agreement.

3.6 Selection criteria

This section sets out the full suite of selection criteria that may be used for any funding process under the Settlement Services Activity. Some Sub-Activities may have specialist criteria applied.

Depending on the Activity/Sub-Activity and type of funding process, a reduced set of assessment criteria may be set by the appropriate departmental delegate exercising their ability to waive certain criteria. The final set of selection criteria will be reflected in the Application Pack.

The equally weighted selection criteria are:

- demonstrate your understanding of the need for the funded Activity in the specified community and/or specified target group
- describe how the implementation of your proposal will achieve the Activity objectives for all stakeholders, including value for money within the Grant funding
- demonstrate your experience in effectively developing, delivering, managing and monitoring Activities to achieve Activity objectives for all stakeholders, and
- demonstrate your organisation's capacity and your staff capability (experience and qualifications) to deliver the Activity objectives in the specified community and/or specified target group.

Applicants will need to demonstrate/address the following, across all selection criteria:

- appropriateness of the proposal to the objectives of the Activity
- potential for the proposal to meet the objectives of the Activity
- the need for the proposal to be carried out
- the governance, expertise and capacity of the applicant, including the applicant's financial risk and audit/fraud strategic plans, and evidence of sound governance
- the applicant's track record in delivering quality Activity services, where applicable
- relevant stakeholders (target groups, communities, government etc.)
- evidence base, where applicable
- the applicant's viable and sustainable financial model
- value for money (of the proposed outcomes, projected deliverables, location, community benefit and the amount of funding sought as detailed in the Application Form)
- the broad assessment requirements outlined in the relevant attachment, and
- other assessment criteria specifically relating to the Activity being funded.

Preference may be given to applicants with experience and/or demonstrated capacity to assist as many clients as possible to become 'job ready', including young migrants, such as:

- partnership arrangements with employers and/or employer groups that can provide training and/or work experience opportunities
- partnership or other arrangements with TAFEs and/or other educational institutions that can help clients move into the Australian workforce, strengthen vocational English, get their skills recognised, prepare job applications and CVs and/or participate in training, placements or other job-readiness activities and
- partnership or other arrangements that support access to other key government services such as the Adult Migrant English Program and/or the Skills for Education and Employment Program (both administered by the Department of Industry) and/or employment services administered by the Department of Employment, such as Job Services Australia, and/or services provided by state or local government.

Smaller providers, particularly those in rural and regional locations and including those who may not be in a position to form partnership arrangements, are also encouraged to apply to provide settlement services for clients with particular needs such as Women at Risk visa holders or migrants from communities and/or in locations requiring particular support.

3.7 How to submit an application

To apply under this process, applicants will need to complete the Application Form and respond to selection criteria as detailed above. Applications must be received electronically by the closing date and time as stated in the Application Pack.

All applicants including current service providers will need to respond fully to the selection criteria in the Application Form and provide the information required in the format and to the extent specified.

Applications can only be submitted during the application round for the Activity and for the locations or sites as defined in the Application Form.

Your application is not an agreement or contract. Meeting the selection criteria does not guarantee funding. Funding is limited and applications will be assessed and prioritised according to the extent to which they meet the selection criteria. Only applications meeting the selection criteria to a high degree are likely to be considered for funding. All information requested on the application must be provided to enable your application to be fully considered.

3.7.1 Applicant responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information to DSS is a serious offence, applicants or their partners who do so may be prosecuted under section 137.1 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995*.

Make sure you keep a copy of your application and any supporting papers, either electronically or in hard copy, for your own records.

Only one application per organisation/region will be assessed. If more than one application is submitted, only the latest application will be considered.

3.7.2 What needs to be included?

DSS will not assess applications that do not contain all required attachments (see Application Form checklist) outlined in the Application Form where an Application Form is provided for completion by applicants.

3.7.3 What should not be included?

Any attachments to the Application Form which are not specifically requested in the Application Form will not be considered as part of the assessment process.

3.7.4 What happens if you provide more than the specified number of words?

The Application Form specifies a word limit for each selection criteria. Text beyond the word limits will not be considered as a part of the assessment process.

3.7.5 Closing date and time

The timeframe for submission of applications for any funding process will be set out in the Application Pack.

In order to be received by DSS, the application must be submitted in full via the method prescribed in the Application Pack.

The applications must be received by DSS within the application period to be considered.

3.7.6 Late applications

DSS may reject any application lodged after the closing date. If an application is late, DSS may determine that there were exceptional circumstances beyond the applicant's control that meant the deadline could not be met. The applicant will need to supply documentary evidence to support any exceptional circumstances. DSS has no obligation to accept a late application. Any decision by DSS to accept or not accept a late application will be final.

3.7.7 Questions and answers during the application period

Details of 'Questions and Answers' facilities and contact details will be provided on the DSS website under the Grants tab. DSS will respond to emailed questions within five working days.

Note: A list of 'Frequently Asked Questions' is available on DSS's website. Responses to questions of interest to all applicants may be added to the list during the application period.

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

3.7.8 Questions after the application period

DSS will **not** accept or respond to any applicant requests for information or correspondence about the status or progress of their application during the assessment phase.

3.7.9 Application acknowledgement

Unless prior agreement has been reached with DSS an application will not be considered lodged until it is received by DSS. The applicant will receive email notification from DSS within 48 hours of an application being lodged correctly. If the applicant has not received notification in this timeframe, the applicant should contact DSS to confirm that the form has been lodged correctly.

3.7.10 Notification of funding round results

DSS will notify applicants of results for the relevant funding round via email.

3.8 Conflicts of Interest

Applicants must identify, in their application, any potential or actual conflicts of interest they believe will or may arise from submitting the application. This should address their responsibilities to the Australian Government and other parties in the course of the Settlement Services Activity.

A conflict of interest can arise when an applicant's integrity, objectivity or fairness in performing the services is at risk due to a pecuniary interest of a person or organisation associated with the applicant or a conflicting business arrangement.

Applicants must specify in their applications how any actual or perceived conflict of interest will be addressed and monitored to ensure it does not compromise the outcomes desired for this grant process.

DSS reserves the right to assess the potential impact of the conflict or perceived conflict and what plans, if any, are proposed to address the conflict of interest in relation to the application for funding.

DSS may reject an application if DSS is not satisfied that there are arrangements in place to appropriately address/manage a perceived or actual conflict of interest.

DSS also has mechanisms in place for identifying and managing potential or actual conflicts of interest such as requiring assessment staff to sign conflict of interest declarations prior to undertaking the assessment of applications.

Follow this link for more information on the [Conflict of Interest Policy for DSS](#) employees and contractors (who are treated as agency staff and required to abide by this policy and the APS Values and Code of Conduct).

4 Terms and conditions applying to Selection/s

4.1 Liability issues

DSS is not liable to the applicant in relation to the selection process, including without limitation, when DSS:

- varies or terminates all or any part of the selection process or any negotiations with the applicant
- decides not to acquire any or all of the services sought through the selection process
- varies the selection process, and/or
- exercises or fails to exercise any of its other rights under, or in relation to the Program Guidelines.

4.2 DSS's rights

DSS reserves the right to amend the Program Guidelines suite of documents by whatever means it may determine in its absolute discretion and will provide reasonable notice of these amendments.

4.3 Disclaimer

DSS, its officers, agents and advisors:

- are not, and will not be, responsible or liable for the accuracy or completeness of any information in or provided in connection with the Program Guidelines Overview
- make no express or implied representation or warranty that any statement as to future matters will prove correct
- disclaim any and all liability arising from any information provided to the applicant, including, without limitation, errors in, or omissions contained in, that information
- except so far as liability under any statute applies, accept no responsibility arising from errors or omissions contained in any information in this document and the Application Form, and
- accept no liability for any loss or damage suffered by any person as a result of that person, or any other person, placing reliance on the contents of these documents, or any other information provided by DSS.

4.4 Fraud

DSS is committed to the Commonwealth Fraud Control Policy and Guidelines. Applicants should familiarise themselves with [the DSS Fraud Control Policy Statement](#). The Fraud Control Policy Statement also underpins an applicant's respective fraud and risk minimisation responsibilities when dealing with DSS.

One key responsibility outlined in the DSS Fraud Control Policy Statement is to report all fraud concerns by:

- leaving an anonymous voicemail message on the DSS Fraud Hotline (1800 133 611), or
- emailing fraud@DSS.gov.au.

4.5 Personal Information

Any personal information you provide is protected under the *Privacy Act 1988*. It can only be disclosed to someone else if you have been given reasonable notice of the disclosure; where disclosure is authorised or required by law or is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law; if it will prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to a person's life or health; or if you have consented to the disclosure.

If you have questions or concerns about how your personal information is handled you can contact the Privacy Officer at DSS on 02 6244 1449, the Privacy Commissioner on 1300 363 992 (local call cost, but calls from mobile and pay phones may incur higher charges) or the Australian Government Privacy Officer by emailing: privacy@privacy.gov.au.

4.6 Freedom of Information

All documents in the possession of DSS including those in relation to the Activity are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act).

The FOI Act creates a general right of access to documents in the possession of DSS and this right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary for the protection of essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

Decisions regarding requests for access under the FOI Act will be made by an authorised decision-maker in accordance with the requirements of the FOI Act.

All FOI requests are to be referred to the FOI Coordinator, Public Law Branch, in DSS.

By mail:

FOI Coordinator
The Department of Social Services
Commercial and Corporate Law Branch,
GPO Box 9820
CANBERRA ACT 2601

By email:

foi@dss.gov.au

For more information on making a request for access to documents in the possession of DSS under the FOI Act, please visit the [Freedom of Information](#) page on the DSS website.

5 Financial and Other Arrangements

5.1 Financial arrangements

DSS uses standard grant agreements. Grants will only be provided in accordance with an executed grant agreement. The terms and conditions of DSS's grant agreements cannot be changed. The grant agreement will contain the entire agreement between the parties. There is no binding agreement on any parties until the grant agreement is agreed to and signed by the delegate and the applicant's authorised representative.

The grant agreement is the legal agreement between DSS and the grant recipient over the grant period. In managing the grant provided, the grant recipient must comply with all the requirements of the grant agreement.

Grant recipients are responsible for ensuring that:

- the terms and conditions of the grant agreement are met
- service provision is effective, efficient, and appropriately targeted
- highest standards of duty of care are applied and

- services are operated in line with, and comply with the requirements as set out within all state and territory and Commonwealth legislation and regulations.

Grant recipients should also be aware of any case based law that may apply or affect their service delivery.

The Terms and Conditions of the grant agreement [are available at this link on the DSS website.](#)

6 Complaints

6.1 Applicants/Grant Recipients

Applicants and grant recipients can contact the complaints service with complaints about DSS's service(s), the selection process or the service of another of DSS grant recipients.

Details of what constitutes an eligible complaint can be provided upon request by DSS. Applicants and grant recipients can lodge complaints through the following channels:

Telephone: 1800 634 035
Fax: (02) 6133 8442

Mail:
DSS Feedback
GPO Box 9820
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Email: complaints@dss.gov.au

If an applicant or grant recipient is at any time dissatisfied with DSS's handling of a complaint, they can contact DSS Ombudsman [via this link to the Ombudsman Website](#) or on 1300 362 072.

6.2 Client/Customer

It is a requirement of your grant agreement to have a transparent and accessible complaints handling policy. This policy should acknowledge the complainant's right to complain directly to you, outline the process for both dealing with the complaint and provide options for escalation both within your organisation and to DSS if necessary. Ensure that you provide information about your complaints handling policy and processes in all correspondence to guarantee it is readily available to the public.

7 Contact information

Contact information for the Settlement Services Activity:

- Address: Tuggeranong Office Park, Soward Way (cnr Athllon Drive), Greenway ACT 2900
Mail: GPO Box 9820, CANBERRA ACT 2601
- Phone: 1800 625 136. If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment, you can use the [National Relay Service](#) to contact any of DSS's listed phone numbers.
- Email: grants@dss.gov.au