
Remote Jobs and Communities Program

Community Development Fund Guidelines

Draft - for - consultation

1. Program Overview: The Remote Jobs and Communities Program

The Remote Jobs and Communities Program (RJCP) is part of the Australian Government's commitment to the Closing the Gap strategy agreed in 2008 by the Council of Australian Governments and is consistent with the *Indigenous Economic Development Strategy 2011-18*.

Communities in remote Australia have told the Australian Government that people need support to get job ready. Many people also said that it was important that everyone contributed by either having a job or participating in community development activities to make them more employable while contributing to their community. The Australian Government believes that everyone that can work should work – if a person is unemployed and able to work then they are a jobseeker. The Australian Government wants jobseekers to get the skills they need to gain employment, while also benefitting their community.

The new program will build on the strengths of existing employment and participation and community programs, while providing a more flexible and responsive service to better meet the needs of people living in remote Australia. The four main programs currently delivering employment and participation services and community development in remote Australia - Job Services Australia, Disability Employment Services, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) and the Indigenous Employment Program – will be rolled into the new integrated service.

RJCP is made up of 59 remote regions. Details on these remote regions can be found at <http://deewr.gov.au/remote-jobs-and-communities-program>.

RJCP will be managed jointly by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA).

2. Activity Overview: Community Development Fund

The Community Development Fund (CDF) is a central part of RJCP. It will provide funding of \$237.5 million over five years to support social and economic development and participation across the remote regions. The CDF will fund services and/or activities that provide benefit to Indigenous people and support the creation of jobs and employment related participation opportunities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous job seekers participating in RJCP. Funds provided under the CDF will be directly targeted at benefitting either:

- Indigenous persons and/or Indigenous communities; and
- Job seekers¹

The CDF will be for all RJCP remote regions. Services/activities to be funded through the CDF will support remote regions by reflecting their Community Action Plan (CAPs).

¹ In these CDF Guidelines the term 'job seeker' means a person who is unemployed, able to work and registered with an RJCP Provider.

Funding Rounds for the CDF will be conducted according to an open selection process.

Funding will become available from 1 July 2013.

Community organisations, local Indigenous and non-government organisations, social enterprises, RJCP Providers, local government entities within the remote region, large and small private sector and commercial enterprises can apply for the CDF.

The CDF is managed by FaHCSIA.

2.1. Aims and Objectives of the Community Development Fund

The CDF's aim is to support social and economic participation in the RJCP remote regions.

The objectives of the CDF are to:

- Provide benefit to Indigenous people and their communities by supporting social and economic participation for RJCP Participants;
- To provide a benefit to job seekers in the remote regions by creating employment opportunities and innovative approaches to recruiting, employing and retaining jobseekers, particularly Indigenous people, women young people and people with a disability; and
- Provide opportunities for job seekers to participate to improve their employment prospects and to help them develop skills and capabilities needed to gain sustainable employment (Participation Activity/ies).

The CDF will also fund activities or services that directly generate employment and participation activities for job seekers in the remote region. These services/activities will include employment or participation targets for job seekers.

Participation activities are those activities that provide a benefit to job seekers and support them to gain sustainable employment. This may include training, education and skills and personal development and life skills. Participation activities should provide job-seekers with the skills they need to be job ready and secure employment.

2.2. Funding Available

There will be up to two funding rounds for the CDF each financial year.

Details for each funding round will be provided on the FaHCSIA website (www.fahcsia.gov.au) in advance of the round opening. In 2013-14, \$37.5 million will be made available through the CDF.

The Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs or delegate will approve funding decisions.

3. Developing an Application for the CDF

3.1. Who is eligible to apply for this funding?

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

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- a) Incorporated Associations;
 - b) Incorporated Cooperatives;
 - c) Companies;
 - d) Aboriginal Corporations (incorporated under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006);
 - e) Organisations established through a piece of Commonwealth or State/Territory legislation;
 - f) Partnerships;
 - g) Trustees on behalf of a Trust;
 - h) Local Governments within the relevant remote region; and
 - i) Consortiums.

3.2. What types of services/activities will the CDF Fund?

When developing applications, consideration should be given to the following:

- the service/activity should be consistent with the CDF's aims and objectives (see 2.1 above); and
- the service/activity should be consistent with the remote region's Community Action Plan.

In order to meet the aims and objectives of the CDF, applicants are encouraged to develop proposals that:

- Generate employment opportunities, particularly sustainable jobs and social enterprises;
- Benefit more than one community within a region or are multi-regional and of benefit to multiple communities;
- Provide benefit to a range of job seekers, including people with a disability, women and young people;
- Support other Government priorities including Closing the Gap on Indigenous disadvantage;
- Work with Indigenous communities and other local non-government organisations to provide participation opportunities that build strong Indigenous communities, for example by supporting school attendance or good tenant behaviour in social housing, or better parenting
- Draw on funding or in kind support from multiple sources, for example philanthropic organisations or projects, local employers and industry, state government, or investments made by community members or organisations.

Activities that the CDF will not fund:

- Services/ activities that are not clearly targeted at benefitting either
 - Indigenous people and/or Indigenous communities
 - Job seekers
 - Services/activities that would displace paid workers
 - Activities that would risk the reputation of RJCP
- The CDF would also not normally fund activities that are the responsibility of State and Territory Governments.

3.2.1. RJCP Participation Account

The Participation Account is a flexible pool of funds that RJCP Providers have access to too support the cost of purchasing goods and services for job seekers

Examples of activities and interventions that could be funded through the Participation Account include:

- travel assistance
- relocation assistance
- mentoring and post-placement support
- work clothing, safety equipment and uniforms
- wage subsidies
- labour hire arrangements
- work tools and tickets and licences
- medical (including medication), dental and optical services
- mental health services and support
- assistance to overcome non-vocational barriers, for example alcohol and drug addiction rehabilitation, counselling and other rehabilitation services
- building foundational, life skills, instilling basic work habits, and improving literacy and numeracy skills
- support for young people to make a successful transition from education to work
- personal development courses
- small business development assistance
- rent and crisis accommodation
- vocational training and skills acquisition
- community participation activities (as outlined above)
- cost of food and utilities for job seekers in specified circumstances, and
- meeting the cost of group activities such as training and work experience, including mentoring and materials.

The CDF is not intended to fund activities/services that should ordinarily be funded under the Participation Account. However in some instances, activities/services that may be funded under the Participation Account may be appropriate for funding under the CDF; for example where courses or training are developed to reach a number of job seekers, or where mental health and support services are provided to an Indigenous community.

Applicants should refer to the selection criteria in considering whether a service/activity that may be funded through the Participation Account may also be funded through the CDF. Where a CDF proposal is seeking significant funding for activities/services that are considered to be more appropriately funded through the Participation Account, the Department may seek relevant amendments to the proposal.

3.2.2. Working with other government agencies and /or non-government organisations

The CDF provides an opportunity to provide funding for services/activities that involve or engage with other government agencies or organisations. In developing

applications for the CDF consideration should also be given to the potential of the proposed service/activity to work with other government agencies or non-government organisations.

3.3. Activity performance and reporting

Successful applicants will enter into a funding agreement with FaHCSIA. Through this agreement, FaHCSIA will monitor and evaluate ongoing performance to ensure that services/activities meet the aims and objectives of the CDF.

Each project will have a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and project evaluation measures scoped appropriate to the project size.

3.4. Misconduct

Where a CDF recipient or a member of staff is involved in serious misconduct that impacts on the operation of the RJCP, the Department reserves the right to seek the suspension or dismissal of that member of staff or in more serious circumstances, may terminate the funding agreement.

3.5. Respecting Community

CDF recipients will need to ensure that they and their staff are aware of and working in accordance with any policies in place within remote communities. For example, if a community has an alcohol management plan in place, the CDF recipient should ensure that all members of staff are aware of the policy and the importance of working with and supporting the community to ensure its effective operation.

3.6. Working with Children and Vulnerable Persons

Where appropriate successful applicants will be required to develop a Working with Children and Vulnerable Person's policy and provide this to FaHCSIA prior to the project commencement. The policy should have regard to ensuring that all persons involved in the project or activity and are involved in working with children and/or vulnerable persons have undertaken and passed the relevant police checks within that state or territory. The policy will include the actions the provider would take should they become aware of an accusation against a member of staff or someone contracted by or delivering services on behalf of the provider.

4. Application Process

Applications for funding will be assessed against the information provided in the application form, including the business case for the service/activity and responses to the selection criteria set out below. The Department may also consider any past performance of the applicant in delivery Government funded services and activities or other information that is available to the Department in relation to the application. The information will be used to inform the assessment of the application and may form the basis for further discussions with the applicant to mitigate any risks and maximise outcomes should their proposal be recommended for funding.

As part of the assessment process, the Department will also consider a range of issues including but not limited to availability of funding and the spread of projects across the 59 RJCP remote regions.

This assessment process will be conducted in accordance with the Commonwealth Grants Guidelines, which includes giving consideration to the ability of the proposed service/activity to deliver value for money, the outcomes from the service/activity and the collaboration and partnership potential of the service/ activity. As this is a grants process, each proposal will be assessed on its merits and in comparison to other proposals submitted at the same time or previously.

4.1. Business Case for the service/ activity

Provide a business case for your activity/service. As part of this business case you should:

- Provide a summary of the service/activity, including the way it will meet the aims and objectives of the CDF outlined in 2.1.
- Clearly identify whether the primary focus of the proposal is to benefit:
 - Indigenous people or Indigenous communities; or
 - Job seekers in the remote regions
- Provide a project plan outlining how you propose to deliver the service/activity, including:
 - The proposed timeline;
 - All activities and milestones by which the progress of the project can be measured;
 - Performance Indicators and progress measures; and
 - All expected outcomes.
- Provide a budget for the activity/service (including the cost of evaluating the service/activity; see selection criterion 4.2.4 below) and identify any assets required to be purchased
- Indicate where the service/activity will be delivered and why this location was chosen
- Specify who will benefit from this service/activity
 - If the service/activity will generate employment, provide a target for both the number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous jobseekers to be employed over the course of the funded period
 - If the service/activity will provide participation activities provide a target for both the number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous job seekers to be taking part in the activities
- Provide details of any stakeholders that you have consulted with when developing the proposal for the service/activity, including the remote region's RJCP Provider
- Describe the infrastructure you will use to deliver the service/activity
- Where relevant provide details on gaining access to Indigenous land or securing appropriate tenure on Indigenous land.

4.2. Selection Criteria

Applications must respond to the following selection criteria:

4.2.1. Acceptance of the proposal by the Indigenous community/ies and alignment with the Community Action Plan

Under this criterion you should:

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- Demonstrate that the service/activity is accepted by the Indigenous community/ies in the region
 - Demonstrate that the service/activity aligns with the community's desires and aspirations for social and economic development
 - Demonstrate that the project aligns with the remote region's RJCP Community Action Plan and other community strategic plans that are in place;
 - Detail how the proposal would support suitable and meaningful participation activities;
 - Demonstrate that the service or activity aligns with the aims and objectives of the CDF.

4.2.2. Demonstrated experience and capacity of your organisation, including any sub-contractors or related entities involved in the service/activity, to work with Indigenous communities

Under this criterion you should:

- Demonstrate that your organisation, including sub-contractors and related entities, has experience in working with Indigenous communities
- Describe your strategy for delivering the service/activity within the Indigenous community/ies, including how the delivery of the service/activity will be consistent with the rules and regulations, including community imposed rules and regulations or cultural practices, of the Indigenous community.

4.2.3. Deliverability, value for money and any whole-of-life considerations, such as the continuing impact of the proposal on the region after the funding period has ended and how the successful results of the project and any assets and tangible outcomes will be managed for the duration of their life.

Under this criterion you should:

- Detail your management practices and outline how the service/activity will be delivered in a cost effective manner and achieve value for money;
- Provide details of any risks to your service/activity and how your organisation will manage those risks, including through quality assurance planning;
- Describe how your service/activity will link up with or support existing or proposed services, activities or other investments by governments and non-government organisations to achieve increased value for money;
- Demonstrate how the successful elements of the service/activity might continue after the funding period has elapsed, including how any ongoing elements of the service/activity will be funded after the funding period has elapsed and for the duration of their life;
- Describe how any assets or tangible outcomes will continue to be managed after the funding period has ended and
- Describe how key relationships with stakeholder, including communities and RJCP Providers, will continue after the funding period has ended.

4.2.4. Evaluation of the success of the service/activity

Under this criterion you should:

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- Provide an evaluation strategy to measure the success of the service/activity; this should include
 - Details of how you will evaluate the service/activity, including how you will monitor and respond to progress and how you will define and measure success
 - Details of any data to be collected
 - Costing of the evaluation of the service/activity, including the proportion of the budget for the service/activity to be directed towards evaluation
 - Provide a best practice strategy for the service/activity; this should include
 - An outline of how results can be shared with key stakeholders or how the service/activity could be delivered in other remote regions.

4.3. Submitting the application

Once the application form has been completed applications can be submitted to:

- By email to RJCPCommunityDevelopmentFund@FaHCSIA.gov.au or
- By post to [**To be confirmed**]

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

The Department may undertake checks of applicants and checks for non-disclosure of any relevant information.

Information obtained from checks on applicants, may be taken into account during the assessment of applications or in making the final decision to offer funding.

4.3.1. Closing Date

Applications must be received by the closing date.

The closing date for this funding round will be published at [**To be confirmed**]

4.3.2. Questions and Answers during the Application period

The Department 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.

Questions and answers will be made available on the FaHCSIA website www.fahcsia.gov.au and additional information about the RJCP is available at www.deewr.gov.au/rsr.

FaHCSIA will advise the contact details for questions and requests for information at each of the selection processes.

4.3.3. 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.

4.3.4. Application acknowledgement

Unless prior agreement has been reached with FaHCSIA an application will not be considered lodged until it is received by FaHCSIA.

The applicant will receive email notification from FaHCSIA within 24 hours of an application being lodged correctly. If the applicant has not received notification in this timeframe, the applicant should contact FaHCSIA to confirm that the form has been lodged correctly.

4.3.5. Contact information

At the commencement of each selection period FaHCSIA will advise the contact details for questions and requests for information that seek clarification of issues to better understand the requirements of the Application Form and Program Guidelines.

FaHCSIA's local State and Territory Offices can be contacted regarding the day-to-day management of the CDF funding agreements, including stakeholder management. Service providers should contact their local Indigenous Coordination Centre or the FaHCSIA State/Territory Office in the first instance.

A list of general FaHCSIA State and Territory Office Network and National Office contact details is available from the FaHCSIA website at www.fahcsia.gov.au .

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