



**Australian Government**

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**Department of Social Services**

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**National Disability Insurance Scheme Programme**

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**NDIS Transition – Sector Development Fund –  
Innovative Workforce Fund Management  
Funding Round Summary**

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May 2016

## **Sector Development Fund – Innovative Workforce Fund Management**

The Sector Development Fund (SDF) assists individuals and organisations to transition to the new National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) operational environment. This includes activities such as improving the capability and capacity of the sector to deliver services within the NDIS, assistance for participants to exercise choice and control, as well as activities to ensure the sector has enough workers with the right skills.

Under the SDF, the Innovative Workforce Fund (IWF) initiative will stimulate and disseminate new, more efficient and effective ways for existing providers to engage, develop and utilise the workforce to meet the needs of NDIS participants. The IWF will identify innovative approaches to workforce development and will promote efficient ways to meet the needs of NDIS participants. The IWF will build a strong evidence base to support the efficacy of innovative workforce approaches, and utilise this evidence base in the assessment of proposals for funding, to promote an evidence-based approach to promoting and sharing good practice. The IWF will support organisations to transition to the NDIS in helping to meet the increased demand for skilled disability workers.

This project has two parts: an evidence collection, analysis and dissemination capacity, and a capacity to assess, develop and manage the funding for a range of innovative initiatives, in four overarching streams:

- *Stream 1:* Redesign support worker roles and test new work roles including strategies to improve access to allied health-related supports in areas of thin supply such as shared workforce and allied health assistant models.
- *Stream 2:* Streamlined administration practices such as human resources, recruitment and retention of staff, including work arrangements that demonstrate more effective workforce utilisation, supervision and support.
- *Stream 3:* Role of technology in workforce practices.
- *Stream 4:* Workforce development in rural and remote areas (including Indigenous workers), and strategies to build capacity to attract and develop the workforce in thin markets.

Two funding rounds will be managed by the successful organisation, one per year of the IWF's operation. It is anticipated that each round will fund up to ten (10) projects, which will be overseen by the successful organisation.

### **Selection type**

This selection is a restricted process to select one organisation to manage the IWF.

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 round is still competitive, but only opened 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 are assessed against designated selection criteria.

## **Applicant eligibility**

Applications will be assessed against the criteria to ensure public accountability and meet Programme outcomes. Organisations must be in one of the following categories to have their application considered:

- 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* – may be a proprietary company (limited by shares or by guarantee) or public companies)
- d. Aboriginal Corporations (incorporated under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*)
- e. Organisations established through a specific piece of Commonwealth or state/territory legislation (public benevolent institutions, churches, universities, unions etc.)
- f. Partnerships
- g. Trustees on behalf of a Trust, and
- h. Where there is no suitable alternative, an individual or - jointly and separately – individuals

## **Available funding for this Activity**

Total funding of \$5 million is available over 2016-17 and 2017-18. This comprises:

- \$1 million (\$500,000 per year) for research and analysis, and management and administration of the IWF, and
- \$4 million (\$2 million per year) to be disbursed for individual projects.

The IWF will fund up to ten (10) projects per year, which will be overseen by the successful organisation.

## **Closing date and time**

Applications **must** be submitted by **2:00pm AEST Thursday, 9 June 2016**.

Late applications – information on DSS grant policies including the late application policy is available on the [DSS website](#).

## **Questions**

Questions and answers for this funding round are included in the Application Pack.

If you cannot find an answer to your question, relating to this selection process or the Activity, on the DSS website please send your question to [grants@dss.gov.au](mailto:grants@dss.gov.au).

Responses to questions will be emailed to all invitees, except where the answers are already available in the Application Pack.

DSS will only answer questions to explain the Application Form and Programme Guidelines. DSS will not advise on how to respond to specific selection criteria.

DSS will not respond to any questions, requests for information or correspondence about the status or progress of applications after **Friday, 3 June 2016** until the conclusion of the selection process.

DSS cannot answer questions about individual applications during the assessment process. All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application when the selection process is complete.

If you would like help or support in using and/or submitting the Application Form, please call 1800 020 283 or TTY 1800 555 677 or email [grants@dss.gov.au](mailto:grants@dss.gov.au).

### **Grant objectives**

The IWF initiative will seek to ensure that the disability workforce will be skilled to meet future requirements. To meet the increasing and competitive demands, the IWF will identify and support innovative workforce approaches and models. Targeted funding will be provided by the IWF to successful applicants to trial or pilot innovative workforce projects.

The IWF will examine good practice to share with the NDIS and disability support sector that includes but is not limited to: flexibility, job attraction and retention, workforce planning.

The management of the IWF and the funding of successful projects must achieve the outcomes of the SDF to ensure the sector has enough workers with the right skills.

The purpose of the IWF is to encourage the development and sharing of innovative approaches to workforce development, and to promote efficient use of workers to meet the needs of NDIS participants through targeted funding of innovative workforce projects.

### **Statement of Requirement**

A single national lead organisation will be contracted through a restricted grants selection process to build the evidence base for workforce innovation, and to use this evidence base to assist in managing assessment of applications and in recommending projects for funding to DSS. Once DSS agrees a recommendation to fund a project, the lead organisation will disburse the agreed amount of funding to the successful applicant, following the signing of a standardised DSS-approved funding agreement. Applications for funding from the IWF will be open on a rolling basis for the duration of the fund (2016-17 and 2017-18 financial years).

The organisation selected to be the national lead organisation must have demonstrated experience in building an evidence base for innovative practice around workforce development including designing and assessing innovative workforce solutions, and a strong theoretical understanding of the challenges and innovative solutions. Given the likelihood that a single organisation may not possess these characteristics, cooperative and collaborative arrangements between organisations such as universities, recruitment and training bodies and workforce consultants are encouraged. The lead organisation will assess applications for funding, make recommendations to DSS, disburse funding through funding

agreements, manage successful organisations and conduct regular reporting against milestones.

## **Value for Money**

In assessing the extent to which applications represent value for money, DSS will consider the information provided under 'Achieving value for money' at page 16 of the [National Disability Insurance Scheme Transition Guidelines Overview](#).

## **Selection Criteria**

When completing your Application you **must** provide all information where you are directed to do so.

The equally weighted selection criteria that will be used for this funding round are:

- 1. Demonstrate your understanding of the need for the funded Activity in the specified community and/or the specified target group.**
  - a. You **must** demonstrate how you will build the evidence base of good practice around innovative workforce development strategies, including through evaluation of projects funded through the IWF, and through research and analysis.
  - b. You **must** demonstrate your organisation or consortium's experience and expertise in:
    - i. designing and assessing innovative workforce solutions, or
    - ii. outline how your organisation will partner with another organisation with this expertise.
  - c. You **must** demonstrate how you will utilise the evidence base you develop to undertake informed assessment of innovative workforce projects, in order to provide sound recommendations to DSS supported by evidence.
- 2. Describe how the implementation of your proposal will achieve the Activity objectives for all stakeholders, including value for money within the Grant funding.**
  - a. You **must** demonstrate your experience and /or capability in conducting research, analysis and evaluation of projects to build and share a strong evidence base.
  - b. You **must** demonstrate your experience and/or capability in effectively delivering, managing and monitoring a similar fund or pool of monies to achieve strategic objectives for all stakeholders.
- 3. Demonstrate your experience and/or capability in effectively developing, delivering, managing and monitoring activities to achieve Activity objectives for all stakeholders.**
  - a. You **must** demonstrate your organisation or consortium's strategies to manage successful applicants to the fund, including your ability to gather, quality assure and disseminate reports and outcomes of the innovative projects funded.

- 4. Demonstrate your organisation's capacity and your staff capability (experience and qualifications) to deliver the Activity objectives in the specified community and/or the specified target group.**
- a. You **must** demonstrate your organisation or consortium's capacity and staff capability (experience and qualifications) to effectively manage the fund and deliver the fund objectives to promote innovative workforce outcomes for the NDIS workforce and sector.

### **Attachments**

No attachments are required for this funding round. The Department will not consider any documents attached to applications.

### **Feedback for this funding round**

Individual feedback will not be provided for this funding round.

### **Multicultural Access and Equity Policy**

*Australia's Multicultural Access and Equity Policy: Respecting diversity. Improving responsiveness*, means that Australian Government agencies make sure that cultural and linguistic diversity is not a barrier for people who need to access government and community services. This means, for example, that appropriate language services should be provided. Grant applicants should consider whether professional translating or interpreting services may be needed to deliver services, projects, activities or events to non-English speakers. If your Application Form states that a budget is required, costs for translating and interpreting services should be included in your budget.

### **Assessment**

The Assessment Team may be comprised of Australian Government officers from each state/territory and national offices. Teams will undertake training so that applications are assessed consistently. The Assessment Team will be bound by the APS Code of Conduct and the departmental Secretary's Instructions.

### **Probity and fairness**

The selection of funding recipients must be fair, open and demonstrate the highest level of integrity.

The following principles will be applied throughout the selection process:

- a. fairness and impartiality;
- b. consistency, accountability and transparency of process;
- c. security and confidentiality of information;
- d. identification and resolution of conflicts of interest; and
- e. compliance with legislative obligations and government policy.

These principles are intended to achieve an equitable, justifiable and sound process.

DSS may engage a Probity Advisor to help DSS meet its obligations to make selection processes defensible and able to stand up to external and internal scrutiny.

The Probity Advisor also advises DSS on, and monitors, the procedures used in the selection process to make sure they comply with the published relevant Programme Guidelines. The Probity Advisor plays no part in the assessment of applications.

### **Programme Guidelines and Operational Guidelines**

The NDIS Guidelines Overview and the Sector Development Fund Strategy and Operational Guidelines provide the starting point for parties considering whether to apply for funding and are the basis for the business relationship between DSS and the funding recipient. Applicants are strongly advised to read these documents.

### **How to apply**

Please read and complete the declaration part of the Application Form carefully. Make sure all responses are true and accurate. Click the **Submit Application** button and follow the instructions. All questions will be verified. Any incorrect responses or unanswered questions will be displayed for you to change. The Application Form will not submit until all responses have been verified.

When you have successfully submitted your application, you will get an automated confirmation receipt and email. Submission may take several minutes, the confirmation you should receive is an automated response from DSS. **Please be patient and do not close the Application Form before you get the confirmation. Do not try to submit your application more than once.** If you do not receive confirmation or you have difficulties submitting the Application Form, please call the DSS Grants Hotline on 1800 020 283.

### **Grant Agreement information**

The Grant Agreement is a performance-based, legally enforceable agreement between the Commonwealth (represented by DSS) and the successful applicant that sets out the Terms and Conditions governing the funding to be provided.

The type of Grant Agreement entered into will depend on the Activity, the assessed Activity risk level, the length of the Activity and the amount of the grant.

The executed Grant Agreement represents each grant provided within it and the relevant Activity and supersedes all prior representations, communications, agreements, statements and understandings, whether oral or in writing.