

Families and Communities Program 2023–24 Volunteer Grants Grant Opportunity Guidelines

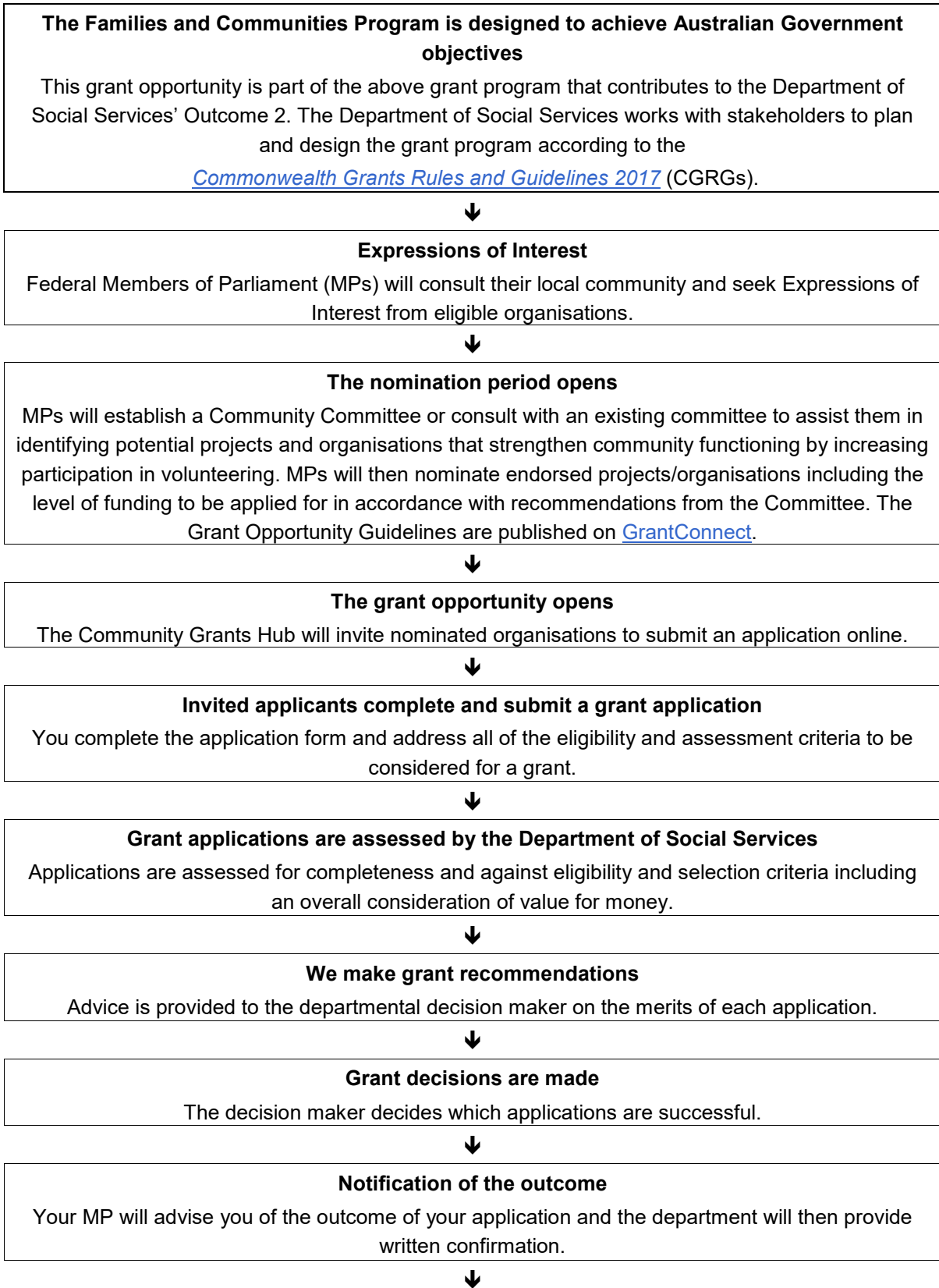
Opening date:	6 November 2023
Closing date and time:	9:00 pm AEDT on 24 November 2023
Commonwealth policy entity:	Department of Social Services
Administering entities:	Community Grants Hub
Enquiries:	<p>If you have any questions, contact Community Grants Hub Phone: 1800 020 283 (option 1) Email: support@communitygrants.gov.au</p> <p>Questions should be sent no later than 5.00 pm AEDT on 17 November 2023</p>
Date guidelines released:	25 July 2023
Type of grant opportunity:	Closed non-competitive

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1. Families and Communities Program: Volunteer Grants processes



Enter into a grant agreement

We enter into a grant agreement with you if successful. The type of grant agreement is based on the nature or complexity of the grant and is proportional to the risks involved.



Delivery of grant

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. The Department of Social Services administers the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making payments.



Evaluation of the 2023–24 Volunteer Grants round

The Department of Social Services will evaluate your specific grant activity and the 2023–24 Volunteer Grants round as a whole. We base this on information you provide us and that we collect from various sources.

1.1 Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the 2023–24 Volunteer Grants round.

You must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant program/grant opportunity
- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how grant applications are considered and selected
- how grantees are notified and receive grant payments
- how grantees will be monitored and evaluated
- the responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

This grant opportunity and process will be administered by the Community Grants Hub on behalf of the Department of Social Services (the department).

2. About the grant program

The Volunteer Grants Activity is an element of the Families and Communities Program, which aims to strengthen relationships, support families, improve the wellbeing of children and young people, reduce the cost of family breakdown and strengthen family and community functioning.

The objectives of Volunteer Grants are to:

- help community organisations to support the efforts of Australia’s volunteers
- help community organisations to support the inclusion of vulnerable people through volunteering
- encourage, support and increase participation in volunteering.

The intended outcome of the activity is to strengthen community functioning by supporting and increasing participation in volunteering.

The Department of Social Services and Community Grants Hub administers the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017](#) (CGRGs).

2.1 Community consultation and the role of the Members of Parliament

Volunteer Grants support the work of local community organisations by enabling the inclusion of vulnerable people and promoting awareness to increase participation in volunteering.

Federal Members of Parliament contribute their knowledge of local needs to the process while providing a mechanism for distributing funds evenly across the country.

Expressions of Interest (EOIs) will open with your local Federal Member of Parliament (MP) in July 2023.

To ensure that community needs are a key focus, each MP will call for EOIs and must consult with a new or existing Community Committee, such as those used in the Stronger Communities Program (administered by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications) to identify local volunteer needs and consider potential applicants in their electorate. The Committee must develop a list of organisations that address those needs.

MPs will then nominate eligible organisations from the list and endorse the level of funding to be applied for, in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee.

The department supports the MP nomination process by providing guidance documentation to MPs outlining their role in the selection process, eligibility requirements and their obligations under the CGRGs. The grant eligibility criteria set out in these Grant Opportunity Guidelines also provide principles to guide MP nomination considerations. For example, the eligibility criteria state that organisations must be not-for-profit and have a minimum of 40% of volunteers in their workplace to be eligible for nomination. MP briefings are conducted prior to the opening of the EOIs. A dedicated helpdesk is available to support MPs through the nomination process.

MPs must submit nominations by 28 September 2023 for up to a total of \$66,225 per electorate.

Only organisations nominated by their Federal MP will be invited to submit an application by the closing date.

Applicants will not be funded for more than the amount that has been endorsed by their MP.

Part funding of an application may occur in order to fully exhaust the funding cap available in each electorate.

Community organisations that do not participate in this EOI process will not be able to apply for a Volunteer Grant. MPs will notify applicants of the outcomes of the EOI process.

The nomination period may be extended due to exceptional circumstances such as pandemics and natural disasters. All other extension requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Nomination and endorsement by your Federal MP and Community Committee and subsequent invitation to apply for a Volunteer Grant does not guarantee that your application will be successful.

3. Grant amount and grant period

For this grant opportunity, \$10 million is available in 2023–24.

Grants of between \$1,000 and \$5,000 are available to eligible not-for-profit community organisations. This funding is to be used to:

- purchase eligible small equipment items for use by volunteers
- contribute to volunteers' fuel costs, during the course of their volunteer work
- contribute to transport costs for volunteers with disability who are unable to drive

- assist with the cost of training courses for volunteers
- undertake background screening checks for volunteers
- conduct activities to promote awareness of, and increase participation in, volunteering opportunities
- adapt practises to support volunteers' safety.

You must spend the grant funding within the activity period, which commences on execution of the agreement and concludes on 30 June 2025.

Grant extensions

If it is likely that your organisation will not be able to spend the grant monies within the grant period, you must seek an extension before the expiry of the grant period on 30 June 2025. This may occur, for example, when an item has been ordered and there has been unavoidable delivery delays.

Extension requests must be submitted in writing to the Community Grants Hub at support@communitygrants.gov.au

4. Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all eligibility criteria. However, in circumstances where your application meets the intent of the program, and would otherwise be eligible, the decision maker can choose to waive the eligibility criteria below.

The Minister for Social Services has agreed to an electorate-based, closed, non-competitive process. The process involves inviting identified applicants to apply and assessing applications against the selection criteria on their own merits and not against other applications.

4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible to apply you must be an organisation that has been nominated by your Federal MP, received an invitation to apply through GrantConnect **and**:

- be a legal and eligible entity
- or**
- be an unincorporated association that agrees to the primary contact on your application entering into an agreement on behalf of the Unincorporated Association. This means that if your grant application is approved, the primary contact will assume all legal liability and become personally liable for the delivery of the funded activity, expenditure of funds and any other associated obligations arising from the grant agreement validly executed
- and**
- have a minimum of 40% of volunteers working for your organisation
- be a not-for-profit organisation
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN) or be willing to provide a [Statement by Supplier Form](#) (reason for not quoting an ABN). Please refer to the [Australian Tax Office](#) website for further information
- have a bank account with an Australian financial institution in the name of the organisation applying.

To be eligible you must be one of the following entity types:

- Indigenous Corporation
- Company¹
- Corporate State or Territory Entity
- non-corporate State or Territory Entity
- non-corporate State or Territory Statutory Authority
- Cooperative
- Incorporated Association
- Statutory Entity and
- be willing and legally able to enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth (refer to section 10.1).

NOTE: If you apply as a legal entity and are found, through eligibility checks, to be an unincorporated organisation, you will be contacted. You will be asked to confirm that either the first or second contact on the application form, or an alternative person connected to your organisation, is legally authorised and willing to assume legal liability. This contact will become personally liable for the delivery of the funded activity, expenditure of funds and any other associated obligations arising from the grant agreement validly executed on behalf of the organisation. If no contact is available to become personally liable your application will not be able to proceed further.

If you are applying as a Trustee on behalf of a Trust, the Trustee must be an eligible entity as listed above. You may be required to provide evidence of your entity type.

An organisation can only apply for one Volunteer Grant. Where an organisation works across more than one electorate, and has been nominated by more than one MP, it can only apply for a Volunteer Grant in one electorate.

Local branches of larger umbrella organisations (for example, Scouts Australia, St John Ambulance Australia) are considered to be organisations in their own right, for the purposes of one application per organisation. For example, two different St Johns Ambulance branches located and operating in different areas and operating as entities in their own right are considered organisations in their own right. Both organisations can be approved for a Volunteer Grant if invited by their MP and the other eligibility criteria is satisfied.

4.2 Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply if you are not nominated by your MP **or** are:

- an organisation, or your project partner is an organisation, included on the [National Redress Scheme](#)'s website on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme'
- an organisation, or your project partner is an organisation, included on the [Workplace Gender Equality Agency](#) website on the non-compliant organisations list
- a for-profit organisation
- a Commonwealth Company

¹ Company is a company incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth)

- a non-corporate Commonwealth Statutory Authority
- a Local Government Entity
- an International Entity
- a political party.

You are not eligible to apply for this grant opportunity if you have not received an invitation to apply through GrantConnect and are not listed as an eligible invited organisation at section 4.1.

4.3 Unincorporated Associations

Non-legal entities such as an Unincorporated Association may be able to receive funding where an individual associated with the organisation is willing to enter into the agreement and personally assume the legal liability on behalf of the Unincorporated Association.

As the legally authorised person acting on behalf of the Unincorporated Association, you will assume all legal responsibility and become personally liable for the delivery of the funded activity, expenditure of funds and any other associated obligations arising from the executed grant agreement.

In this instance, the organisation will be required to provide the contact details of 2 members who can provide verbal assurance if required, that the individual applying will be the responsible person for the legal liability. The grant agreement will be entered into with the individual on behalf of an Unincorporated Association. The bank account provided must be in the name of the organisation, not the individual.

5. What the grant money can be used for

5.1 Eligible grant activities

Small equipment items can make a volunteer's work easier, safer and more enjoyable. They can also help volunteers keep up with changing technology by supporting volunteers to access digital and electronic equipment.

Eligible small equipment

Small equipment items must be portable, tangible and purchased for the direct benefit of volunteers. They should represent value for money and can include delivery/freight and set-up costs.

Transport costs of volunteers with disability

Volunteers with disability who cannot drive can be reimbursed for the cost of transport or be provided with pre-paid travel cards for use while undertaking their volunteering work. This transport includes taxis and public transport (pre-paid travel cards are acceptable).

Fuel costs incurred by volunteers

Eligible fuel costs are costs associated with volunteers using their own vehicle during the course of their volunteering work. Volunteers can be reimbursed for the cost of the petrol or provided with pre-paid petrol cards. This includes fuel used travelling to and from the point of volunteering and whilst volunteering, for example, delivering food and helping people in need. Fuel costs that are eligible include all motor vehicle fuels including petrol, diesel and gas.

Training for volunteers

Funding can be used to support the costs of training to help volunteers learn new skills or gain qualifications for their volunteering work. Training courses may include mental health, first aid, leadership, communication, governance and/or working with vulnerable people. Courses that are recognised and lead to a Statement of Attainment, Certificate or Diploma are preferred.

Background screening checks of volunteers

Funding is available to help with the cost of background screening checks of volunteers. These include criminal record checks, police checks and police certificates, Working With Children Checks and Working With Vulnerable People Checks.

Promoting awareness of and increasing participation in volunteering opportunities

Funding can be used to support re-engagement of volunteers once programs can recommence safely. Activities can also be run that are specifically targeted towards recruiting new volunteers.

Adapting practices to support volunteers' safety

Funding is available for resources to adapt policies and procedures for volunteering programs to allow volunteers to operate safely, for example, signage, or installation of protective screens.

5.2 Eligible locations

Funding totalling \$66,225 (GST exclusive) will be available in each federal electorate.

5.3 Eligible expenditure

Grant funding can only be used for eligible items that benefit the volunteer. Grant applicants should ensure that the funding is used to pay for items that are cost-effective and reasonably priced.

Where the grant money is used to purchase equipment that may require installation, the cost of installation is an eligible expenditure.

Appendix A outlines the categories of items and examples of eligible items that are usually purchased within that category. The examples are only a guide to help you select the right category. If a specific item is not listed, select the category that most closely matches the item to be purchased. Examples of items that are not eligible are shown in section 5.4.

The department may update the guidelines on eligible and ineligible expenditure from time to time. If your application is successful, the version in place when you submitted your application applies to your grant activity and grant agreement.

Any potentially ineligible expenditure item described on your application will be taken into consideration by the decision maker during assessment. They will determine from your application if the categories and items listed are eligible or not, and their decision will be final.

All grant funds are to be used for activities which take place in Australia.

Record keeping requirements

If your application is successful, you must keep the receipts for items that you have purchased for 5 years. This will be the proof of purchase needed if you are requested to acquit your grant, as detailed in section 12.2.

You must incur the expenditure on your grant between the start date and the end date of the activity period, outlined in your grant agreement, for the expenditure to be eligible.

5.4 What the grant money cannot be used for

You cannot use the grant for:

- items that do not directly benefit the organisation's volunteers
- items that are already paid for by other sources for example, state/territory governments, community groups
- items that are for the organisation's paid staff or for members or participants that are not volunteers of the organisation
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation
- advertising, logos, banners, display boards, uniforms (unless solely for the volunteers), badging, or other things that advertise your organisation/community group unless such advertising is directly related to raising awareness of volunteering opportunities available, or re-engaging volunteers
- administration costs such as leasing, rental, hiring, labour, utilities, insurance and travel
- fees, charges, and subscriptions
- service charges, extended warranties and other labour costs
- conferences, events and functions for the organisation – these items will be allowed if directly benefitting the volunteer, for example, training or recruitment and must not include food or accommodation costs
- hospitality costs
- purchase of vehicles and powered boats
- buildings, renovations and permanent fixtures – plumbing, kitchens, hot water systems, permanent fencing
- window coverings (such as curtains and awnings) and floor coverings
- consumable supplies – food, stationery (such as paper and folders), cleaning products (apart from sanitising products for personal or surface use), ink, toners, soil, refilling of gas bottles
- gift cards (with the exception of pre-paid fuel cards).

6. The assessment criteria

The department will compliance check and assess your application on its own merits and consider the following criteria:

- the extent to which the project meets the objectives of the program
- whether the project demonstrates value for money.

Value with relevant money is the principle under which grants are considered to be a proper use of public resources, as per section 2.2 of the CGRGs. Under the CGRGs, value for money is determined by considering the relative value of the grant sought, as well as the effectiveness of the proposed grant activities in supporting the objectives of the Volunteer Grants program. Also considered is the extent to which the geographic location or activities of the organisation matches the organisation's identified priorities in the grant application. Assessing value for money in providing grant funding involves consideration by the department as to whether the expended funds will be used efficiently, effectively, economically and ethically under the CGRGs and the Volunteer Grants Opportunity Guidelines.

You must indicate in your application what category/categories of items you wish to purchase to support your volunteers.

Your response must also include details on the percentage of volunteers to other staff that work at your organisation, the type of services your organisation provides to the community, and how the eligible items will **directly benefit your volunteer** workers and the community more broadly.

The department may seek and consider additional information about you or your application. They may do this from within the Commonwealth, including through contacting Federal MPs. This may also include obtaining information about you or your application that is available through the normal course of business.

Information collected by the department may be used in assessment and compliance checking of your application.

The department will also examine whether an applicant has an outstanding acquittal from a previous grant round when assessing a new application.

7. How to apply

Before applying, you should read and understand these guidelines and the sample grant agreement published on [GrantConnect](#). Any changes to the grant documentation will be published as an addendum on GrantConnect. To be automatically notified of any changes you can register on GrantConnect.

You can only submit one application for this grant.

Where an organisation applies across multiple electorates, the application for the highest grant amount will be considered for a Volunteer Grant.

Where an organisation submits more than once in the same electorate, creating a duplicate application, only the last application received will be considered for a Volunteer Grant.

Expressions of Interest (EOIs) will open with your local Federal MP in July 2023.

To apply, your organisation must be nominated by your local Federal MP, who will also indicate the level of funding your organisation has been endorsed for. Once your organisation is nominated you must:

- complete the online application form once you receive the invitation via GrantConnect.
- be an authorised signatory for the nominated organisation (for example, president, chairperson, treasurer, secretary)
- ensure that the application is filled out and submitted by the authorised signatory
- provide contact details of an individual associated with your organisation who has agreed to enter into an agreement on your behalf and assume legal liability if you are applying as an unincorporated association
- provide all the information requested
- address all questions in the application form
- submit your application to the Community Grants Hub by **9:00 pm AEDT 24 November 2023**.

Only applicants invited to apply can submit an application, you must not forward the invitation link to anyone else.

The application period may be extended due to exceptional circumstances such as pandemics and natural disasters. All other extension requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

A nomination to submit an application by your MP does not guarantee that your application will be successful.

The department will not provide application forms or accept applications for this grant opportunity by fax or mail.

The application form includes help information. You are responsible for making sure your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the [Criminal Code Act 1995](#) and the department will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

If you need further guidance around the application process, or if you are unable to submit an application online, contact support@communitygrants.gov.au or by calling 1800 020 283 (option 1).

You cannot change your application after the closing date and time.

If we find an error or something missing we may ask you for clarification or additional information. This will not change the nature of your application. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you that would change your application after the closing time.

You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents. You will receive an automated notification acknowledging the receipt of your application.

7.1 Timing of grant opportunity processes

You must submit an application between the published opening and closing dates.

Late applications

We will not accept late applications unless an applicant has experienced exceptional circumstances that prevent the submission of the application. Broadly, exceptional circumstances are events characterised by one or more of the following:

- reasonably unforeseeable
- beyond the applicant's control
- unable to be managed or resolved within the application period.

Exceptional circumstances will be considered on their merits and in accordance with probity principles.

How to lodge a late application

Applicants seeking to submit a late application will be required to submit an email request to the Community Grants Hub via support@communitygrants.gov.au.

The late application should include a detailed explanation of the circumstances that prevented the application being submitted prior to the closing time. Where appropriate, supporting evidence can be provided to verify the claim of exceptional circumstances.

All late applications will be considered; however, the decision maker or their appointed representative will determine whether a late application will be accepted. The decision of the decision maker will be final and not be subject to a review or appeals process.

Once the outcome is determined, the Community Grants Hub will advise the applicant whether their application is successful.

If your request is approved, the Community Grants Hub will send a link to the grant application form which must be submitted by 1 December 2023 being 5 business days after the grant opportunity has closed.

No late applications will be accepted or considered after 1 December 2023.

Expected timing for this grant opportunity

If you are successful, you will be expected to start your grant activity around May 2024.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe (cumulative)
Opening date for Expressions of Interest through local Federal MP	25 July 2023
Completed MP Nomination Workbook due to the Department of Social Services	28 September 2023
Organisations invited to apply for a Volunteer Grant	6 November 2023
Applications close	24 November 2023
Assessment of applications	December 2023 to March 2024
Approval of outcomes of assessment process	April 2024
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	April 2024
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	April 2024
Earliest start date of project	May 2024
End date of grant commitment	30 June 2025

7.2 Questions during the application process

If you need further guidance about the application process, or if you have issues submitting an application online, contact support@communitygrants.gov.au or call 1800 020 283 (option 1). Please note that only invited applicants' questions will be responded to during the application submission period.

The Community Grants Hub will respond to emailed questions within 5 working days. Answers to questions are posted on the [GrantConnect](#) website.

The question and answer period will close at 17 November 2023. Following this time, only questions about using and/or submitting the application form will be answered.

8. The grant selection process

8.1 Assessment of grant applications

You must indicate in your application what category/categories of items you wish to purchase to support your volunteers.

Your response must also include details on the percentage of volunteers to other staff that work at your organisation, the type of services your organisation provides to the community, and how the eligible items will **directly benefit your volunteer** workers and the community more broadly.

The department may seek and consider additional information about you or your application. They may do this from within the Commonwealth, including through Federal MPs. This may also include information about you or your application that is available through the normal course of business. Information collected by the department may be used in assessment and compliance checking of your application.

The department will also consider whether an applicant has an outstanding acquittal from a previous grant round when assessing a new application.

The department will assess your application on its own merits and for completeness against all the eligibility criteria detailed in the guidelines.

If the selection process identifies unintentional errors in your application, you may be contacted to correct or clarify the information.

To be recommended for funding, your project must meet the selection criteria, the objectives of the program, and demonstrate it will achieve value for money.

8.2 Who will assess and select applications?

The department will assess each eligible and compliant application on its own merit and against the selection criteria. Individual assessments of applications identified as eligible for the grant are conducted by departmental personnel, who will undertake training to ensure the consistent assessment of all applications.

The department uses this information to help them develop recommendations on applications to be awarded a grant.

8.3 Who will approve grants?

The delegate (a departmental executive) decides which grants to approve based on the assessment outcomes and the availability of grant funds for the purposes of the grant program.

The delegate's decision is final in all matters, including:

- the approval of applications for funding
- the amount of grant funding awarded
- the terms and conditions of funding.

The delegate will not approve funding if:

- the application is ineligible according to these guidelines
- the application does not achieve value with relevant money
- an organisation, or project partner is an organisation, included on the [National Redress Scheme's website](#) on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme'
- an organisation, or your project partner is an organisation, included on the [Workplace Gender Equality Agency](#) website on the non-compliant organisations list
- the application is not considered an appropriate use of Commonwealth resources.

There is no appeal process regarding decisions to approve or not approve a Volunteer Grant.

9. Notification of application outcomes

If you are successful, you will receive an email notification from your Federal MP and a Letter of Agreement from the department via email. If you are unsuccessful, you will be notified in writing via email.

9.1 Feedback on your application

A feedback summary will be published on the Community Grants Hub website to provide all organisations with easy access to information about the grant selection process and the main strengths and areas for improving applications.

Individual feedback will not be provided for this grant opportunity.

10. Successful grant applications

10.1 The grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth represented by the Community Grants Hub. We will offer successful applicants a Letter of Agreement for this grant opportunity.

Each agreement has general/standard grant conditions that cannot be changed. Sample grant agreements are available on [GrantConnect](#) as part of the grant documentation. We will use a schedule to outline the specific grant requirements.

The department must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. Execute means both you and the Commonwealth have entered into the grant agreement. The department is not responsible for any of your expenditure until a grant agreement is executed. You must not spend your grant until the Activity Start Date (the date the grant agreement is executed). You must not spend any grant funds beyond the Activity End Date (the date the grant agreement ends) unless you have sought and received approval for an extension to the grant activity period.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement.

Letter of Agreement

The Commonwealth Individualised Letter of Agreement comprises the Schedule and the corresponding grant conditions if applicable. Successful applicants are generally not required to sign the Letter of Agreement. When submitting their application, applicants are required to agree to the terms and conditions of the letter of agreement should the application be successful by clicking 'I agree'. Should a successful applicant use a third party to submit their grant application they may be required to sign a grant agreement and return it to the department.

You will be advised of the date of commencement for your grant agreement when you are sent the Letter of Agreement. You must advise the department in writing prior to the specified date if you no longer wish to receive the grant.

10.2 Commonwealth Child Safe Framework

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse highlighted the need for organisations to adopt child safe practices including appropriate screening of staff, mandatory reporting and adoption of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. The Australian Government committed to a new Commonwealth-wide framework to protect children and young people it is responsible for – the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework (CCSF).

The Australian Government is considering appropriate ways to apply the requirements of the CCSF to grant recipients. A child safety clause is likely to be included in a grant agreement where the Commonwealth considers the grant is for:

- services directly to children, or
- activities that involve contact with children that is a usual part of, and more than incidental to, the grant activity.

A child safety clause may also be included in the grant agreement if the Commonwealth considers the grant activity involves children more broadly.

The successful applicant will be required to comply with all child safety obligations included in the grant agreement published with this grant opportunity or notified to the successful applicant prior to execution of the grant agreement. Irrespective of the child safety obligations in the grant agreement you must always comply with your state and territory legislative requirements for working with children and mandatory reporting.

10.3 How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the maximum grant amount to be paid. The department will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra costs, you must meet them yourself.

The department will pay 100% of the grant on execution of the grant agreement.

10.4 Grant payments and GST

GST is out of scope for 2023–24 Volunteer Grants.

If you receive a grant, you should consider speaking to a tax advisor about the effect of receiving a grant before you enter into a grant agreement. You can also visit the [Australian Taxation Office website](#) for more information. The department does not provide advice on your particular taxation circumstances.

11. Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website no later than 21 calendar days after the date of effect as required by section 5.3 of the [CGRGs](#).

12. How we monitor your grant activity

12.1 Keeping us informed

You must let the department know if anything is likely to affect your organisation's ability to spend the grant.

The department needs to know of any changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if it affects your ability to complete your grant, carry on business and pay debts due.

You must also inform the department of any changes to your organisation's:

- name
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of the terms and conditions under the grant agreement, you must contact the department immediately.

12.2 Reporting

You are required to keep appropriate records for up to 5 years to ensure that if your organisation is asked to report on the grant, it is able to do so.

12.3 Financial declaration

The department may ask you to provide a financial declaration. The financial declaration will verify that you spent the grant in accordance with the grant agreement.

If you are asked to report, the department will require you to provide proof of purchase. This can be done in the form of receipts. If receipts have been misplaced, you may complete a statutory declaration with details of specific items purchased including the date and amount of purchase.

Spending must be within the grant period

All funding must be spent by the grant agreement completion date, which is stated in the Letter of Agreement. You cannot use grant funding for purchases made before the commencement of the grant period or after the expiry of the grant period.

Fuel acquittal

There are 4 different options for the record keeping requirements for fuel costs. You can use any one of these options:

1. A log book to record all car trips which a person makes while doing volunteer work. This book would be proof of costs and should include details of each trip (date, from/to, reason for trip) and record the kilometres travelled (meter readings).
2. An account at a local service station and provide authority for volunteers to charge their approved fuel to the account. This would be paid direct by your organisation and account receipts would be sufficient proof.
3. Copies of actual fuel expenditure receipts.
4. Pre-paid petrol cards. Payment receipts would be sufficient proof of expenditure.

Transport costs (only applicable to volunteers with disability who cannot drive)

There are 4 different options for the record keeping requirements for transport costs. You can use any one of these options:

1. Pre-paid travel cards. Payment receipts would be enough proof of spending.
2. Volunteers may use a log book to record all volunteer transport trips. This log book would be sufficient proof of travel costs. The book should include details of each trip (date, from/to, reason for trip, method of transport).
3. Copies of public transport tickets.
4. Copies of original receipts (such as taxi receipts).

12.4 Grant agreement variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect your progress. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your grant agreement. You can request a variation in writing to the Community Grants Hub at support@communitygrants.gov.au

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on provisions in the grant agreement and the likely impact on achieving outcomes.

12.5 Record keeping

The department may request to inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement.

12.6 Evaluation

The department will evaluate the 2023–24 Volunteer Grants opportunity to see how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your application and reports for this purpose. We may also ask you for more information to help us understand how the grant impacted you and to evaluate how effective the program was in achieving its outcomes.

We may contact you up to 3 years after you finish your grant for more information to assist with this evaluation.

12.7 Acknowledgement

If you make a public statement about a grant funded under the 2023–24 Volunteer Grants Activity, the department requires you to acknowledge the grant by using the following:

‘This [\[name of grant activity or project/services\]](#) received grant funding from the Australian Government.’

13. Probity

The Australian Government will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRGs.

These guidelines may be changed by the Department of Social Services. When this happens, the revised guidelines are published on [GrantConnect](#).

13.1 Enquiries and feedback

Complaints about this grant opportunity

The department’s [complaints procedure](#) applies to complaints about this grant opportunity. All complaints about this grant opportunity, including grant decisions, must be made in writing.

Any questions you have about grant decisions for this grant opportunity should be sent to support@communitygrants.gov.au.

Complaints about the selection process

Applicants can contact the complaints service with complaints about the Community Grants Hub’s service(s) or the selection process.

Details of what makes an eligible complaint can be provided by asking the Community Grants Hub. Applicants can use the [complaints form](#) on the Department of Social Services website, by phone or mail.

Phone: 1800 634 035

Mail: Complaints
GPO Box 9820
Canberra ACT 2601

Complaints to the Ombudsman

If you do not agree with the way the Community Grants Hub or the department has handled your complaint, you may complain to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#). The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the Community Grants Hub or Department of Social Services.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (toll free): 1300 362 072

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au

Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

13.2 Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if the department and the Community Grants Hub staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel has a:

- professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer or member of an external panel
- relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently
- relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program/grant opportunity.

You will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interest or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later think there is an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform the Community Grants Hub in writing immediately at support@communitygrants.gov.au

The Federal MP, their electorate staff and members of the Community Committee must also declare any perceived or existing conflicts of interest and that they have been mitigated, or that, to the best of their knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be handled as set out in the [Australian Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)](#) of the [Public Service Act 1999](#). Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

We publish our conflict of interest policy on the [Community Grants Hub](#) website.

13.3 Privacy

We treat your personal information according to the [Privacy Act 1988](#) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- who we give your personal information to.

In submitting a grant application under this opportunity, you agree to the Australian Government collecting your personal information, including your name, contact details and role in your organisation, in order to assess your application and for the purpose of grants administration. If you do not provide this information we cannot assess your grant application.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information collected about you under this grant opportunity in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes disclosing grant information on GrantConnect as required for reporting purposes and giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

We may share the information you give us in your application, including personal information, with other Commonwealth entities, the responsible Minister, Assistant Ministers and their staff, and with Members of Parliament, for other purposes including government administration, research or service delivery, or as otherwise authorised or required by Australian law.

As part of your application, you also declare your ability to comply with the Privacy Act and the Australian Privacy Principles, and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and subcontractors that you engage to assist with the activity, in respect of personal information you collect, use, store, or disclose in connection with the activity. Accordingly, you must not do anything, which if done by the Australian Government would breach an Australian Privacy Principle as defined in the Privacy Act.

13.4 Confidential information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to give out to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you; or your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will keep any information in connection with the grant agreement confidential to the extent that it meets all of the 3 conditions below:

1. You clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential.
2. The information is commercially sensitive.
3. Revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

- Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively
- employees and contractors of our department so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery
- other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations

- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

The grant agreement may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the grant agreement.

13.5 Freedom of information

All documents that the Australian Government has, including those about this grant opportunity, are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act gives people the ability to get information held by the Australian Government and its organisations. Under the FOI Act, people can ask for documents the Australian Government has. People may not be able to get these documents if these documents need to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons who the information relates to.

All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

By mail: Freedom of Information Team
 Government and Executive Services Branch
 Department of Social Services (DSS)
 GPO Box 9820
 Canberra ACT 2601

By email: foi@dss.gov.au

14. Glossary

Term	Definition
accountable authority	see subsection 12(2) of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act).
administering entity	when an entity that is not responsible for the policy, is responsible for the administration of part or all of the grant administration processes.
closed, non-competitive	a closed non-competitive process involves inviting identified applicants to apply and assessing applications against the selection criteria and not against other applications.
commencement date	the expected start date for the grant activity.
Commonwealth entity	a department of state, or a parliamentary department, or a listed entity or a body corporate established by a law of the Commonwealth. See subsections 10(1) and (2) of the PGPA Act.
Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs)	the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework that articulates the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this overarching framework, non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration.
date of effect	can be the date on which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date. Where there is no grant agreement, entities must publish information on individual grants as soon as practicable.
decision maker	the person who makes a decision to award a grant.
eligibility criteria	refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant.
Funding Arrangement Manager	the officer responsible for the ongoing management of the grantee and their compliance with the grant agreement.

Term	Definition
grant	<p>for the purposes of the CGRGs, a 'grant' is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. under which relevant money² or other Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) money³ is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth b. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives.
grant activity/activities	refers to the project/tasks/services that the grantee is required to undertake.
grant agreement	sets out the relationship between the parties to the agreement, and specifies the details of the grant.
grant opportunity	refers to the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted, and will reflect the relevant grant selection process.
grant program	a 'program' carries its natural meaning and is intended to cover a potentially wide range of related activities aimed at achieving government policy outcomes. A grant program is a group of one or more grant opportunities under a single [entity] Portfolio Budget Statement program.
GrantConnect	the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs.
Grantee	the organisation which has been selected to receive a grant.
Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS) program	PBS programs each link to a single outcome and provide transparency for funding decisions. These high-level PBS programs often comprise a number of lower level, more publicly recognised programs, some of which will be grant programs. A PBS program may have more than one grant program associated with it, and each of these may have one or more grant opportunities.
selection criteria	comprise eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.

² Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

³ Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

Term	Definition
selection process	the method used to select potential grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and/or the assessment criteria.
value with money	<p>refers to ‘value with relevant money’ which is a judgement based on the grant proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations.</p> <p>When administering a grant opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ quality of the project proposal and activities ▪ fit for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives ▪ absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government’s outcomes being achieved ▪ potential grantee’s relevant experience and performance history.
Volunteering	Is <i>‘time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain’</i> (Volunteering Australia, July 2015).

Appendix A. 2023–24 Volunteer Grants – item categories

To be eligible, items must be portable and **directly benefit the volunteers in your organisation**.

The examples below have previously been purchased with Volunteer Grants funds and are intended as a guide only to help you select the most appropriate category.

If a specific item is not listed, select the category/categories that most closely matches the item/s to be purchased. Delivery/freight and set-up costs for eligible items are allowed.

Volunteer Grants funding must only be spent on eligible items.

Examples of ELIGIBLE items	Examples of INELIGIBLE items
Background screening checks of volunteers	
✓ Contribute to the cost of police checks or working with vulnerable people checks	✗ Screening checks already paid for from other sources for example, state/territory governments, community groups
Cleaning items	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Broom/mop ✓ Carpet steam cleaner ✓ Hand dryer ✓ Step ladder ✓ Vacuum cleaner ✓ Sanitising solution for surfaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Cleaning products and consumables other than sanitising products for personal or surface use related to ensuring COVID-19 Safe protocols are met ✗ Cost of professional cleaning services
Computer & office equipment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cash register ✓ External hard drive/USB drive ✓ Filing cabinet ✓ ID card printer laminator ✓ Laptop/desktop ✓ Whiteboard (portable) ✓ Modem/router ✓ Payment terminal/mobile card reader ✓ Printer/copier/scanner ✓ Software (excluding subscriptions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Ongoing subscriptions, serviced agreements, or annual payments associated with software (such as security software, Microsoft Office, phone apps, cloud storage) ✗ Cost of renting computer equipment ✗ Ongoing service fees associated with electronic payment terminals/card readers ✗ Consumable goods such as printer paper, ink, toner, stationery, etc. ✗ Costs of commercial printing services
Electronic/audio/video	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Camera ✓ Dictaphone ✓ DVD player ✓ GPS/UHF radio transceiver ✓ Microphones ✓ Mobile phone/tablet ✓ Motion sensor camera, including security systems ✓ Public address system ✓ Stereo/bluetooth speaker ✓ Television ✓ Video projector/screen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Ongoing costs of phone/network plans ✗ Hire equipment costs ✗ Fixed wiring installation in buildings ✗ Audio/electronic equipment for the benefit of the organisation or players/participants

Examples of ELIGIBLE items	Examples of INELIGIBLE items
First aid/health and safety	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ COVID-19 safety signage/screens ✓ CPR manikin/training tools ✓ Defibrillator ✓ Dehumidifier ✓ Demountable fire hose ✓ Dust extractor/respirators ✓ Emergency oxygen ✓ Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons ✓ Fire blanket/fire extinguisher ✓ Fire tools (portable) ✓ First aid kit ✓ High visibility vests ✓ Hydraulic lift for wheelchairs (portable) ✓ Personal Protective Equipment (including masks, sunscreen, sanitiser) ✓ Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) ✓ Sterilising unit ✓ Stretchers/rescue boards ✓ Test and Tag machine ✓ Torches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Fixed eye wash stations ✗ Permanently fixed safety fencing ✗ Protective clothing branded with organisation's logo for example, apron with organisation's logo embroidered onto front ✗ Ongoing fees associated with maintaining/safety inspection of equipment
Fuel costs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reimbursement of Volunteers' fuel costs who use their own car/vehicle when undertaking their volunteering activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Cost of volunteers using an office vehicle ✗ Fuel costs incurred by paid staff ✗ Fuel to be used in any assets owned by the organisation ✗ Fuel for transporting sporting teams and staff that are not volunteers to attend events
Food preparation equipment/consumables	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Portable kitchen appliances ✓ Bain Marie ✓ Coffee maker ✓ Deep fryer ✓ Kitchen utensils ✓ Microwave ✓ Pie warmer ✓ Water cooler/urn/thermos ✓ BBQ ✓ Esky/cooler 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Hot water systems ✗ Fixed kitchen appliances for example, oven ✗ Installed cooler room ✗ Disposable kitchen items for example, paper plates, napkins, plastic forks, etc. ✗ Food stock for example, soft drinks, bread, cooking oil etc. ✗ Meals for players, participants, staff or volunteers ✗ Meal vouchers ✗ Catering or equipment hire expenses

Examples of ELIGIBLE items	Examples of INELIGIBLE items
Furniture and equipment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Bench seats ✓ Chairs ✓ Desk (non- fixture)/tables ✓ Indoor/outdoor lighting (portable) ✓ Sewing machine ✓ Portable toilet (excluding hire) ✓ Trailer ✓ Water tank (includes installation) ✓ Portable marquee/pergola/gazebo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Permanent fixtures × Hiring of equipment × Ongoing maintenance and consumables × Fixed window blinds and installation × Fixed/brick barbeque × Built in shelving × Rugs and furnishings for the benefit of the organisation
Heating/cooling – portable, includes delivery and set-up costs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Air conditioner ✓ Fan ✓ Heater 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Permanent fixtures × Ducted heating/cooling
Landscaping/gardening	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Arena Rake (tow behind) ✓ Backpack sprayer ✓ Blower vacuum ✓ Brush cutter ✓ Fencing (temporary) ✓ Hand held gardening equipment (for example, spades, rakes, shears) ✓ Hedge trimmer ✓ Hoses ✓ Ladder ✓ Mower/ride on mower ✓ Rotary hoe ✓ Tree planting equipment ✓ Wheelbarrow ✓ Whipper snipper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Consumable gardening supplies such as fertilizer, seeds, seedlings, bulbs, soil, mulch etc. × Permanent/fixed fencing and associated permits × Costs of hiring gardeners/gardening equipment × Permanent changes to the landscape for example, installation of rock walls, permanent paving, etc. × Commemorative statues, plaques or trophies × Fixed pergola
Leisure and sporting (excludes items for the benefit of the organisation or players)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Aqua wheelchair (portable) ✓ Flags (maritime) ✓ Line marker machines ✓ Electronic scoreboard ✓ Coach/referee kits ✓ Sporting equipment for use by volunteers ✓ Uniforms for volunteers only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Items for the benefit of the organisation or players × Players uniforms × Sporting equipment to be used by participants × Merchandise with club logos for example, water bottles, duffle bags, etc.
Storage	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Bookcase ✓ Cupboard/cabinet (non-fixture) ✓ Lockers ✓ Shed (portable) ✓ Storage containers ✓ Trolley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Permanent fixtures × Built in shelving × Costs of storage hire for example, storage units × Building construction, extensions or renovations and associated expenses

Examples of ELIGIBLE items	Examples of INELIGIBLE items
Tools/power tools	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chainsaw and accessories ✓ Cement mixer ✓ Generator ✓ Hand tools and accessories ✓ High pressure cleaner ✓ Picket Post Driver ✓ Power tools/rechargeable batteries ✓ Pump (portable) ✓ Tool kits/tool boxes ✓ Work bench 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Tools to be used by paid staff ✗ Heavy machinery for example, forklifts, cranes etc. ✗ Construction of fixed sheds
Training costs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Contribute to the training costs for volunteers ✓ First Aid course ✓ Cost of hiring trainer ✓ Cost of volunteer's travel to and from training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Costs of training for paid staff, organisational members or participants/clients of the organisation ✗ Costs to meet the training expenses of other organisation's volunteers ✗ Trainer incidental costs for example, transport, parking and accommodation costs ✗ Volunteer's food and accommodation costs during offsite training
Transport costs for volunteers with a disability	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Contribute to the reimbursement of transport costs incurred by volunteers with disability, who are unable to drive ✓ Taxi vouchers ✓ Fuel costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Transport already paid for from other sources for example, state/territory governments, community groups ✗ Transport which is not for volunteering work ✗ Travel for an organisation's paid staff ✗ Travel for members or participants who are not volunteers of the organisation
Volunteer engagement/recruitment opportunities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Activities/events run solely for re-engagement/recruitment of volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Promotional activities that benefit the organisation for example, product or service advertisement, branding design, etc. ✗ Hospitality and catering costs for example, food ✗ Parking expenses incurred to participants, volunteers or staff ✗ Gifts to volunteers, staff, participants or players ✗ Embroidery/logo printing expenses for promotion of organisation

Examples of ELIGIBLE items	Examples of INELIGIBLE items
Whitegoods and major appliances	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Clothes dryer ✓ Dishwasher ✓ Freezer/refrigerator ✓ Stove/oven portable (non-fixtured) ✓ Washing machine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Fixed item for example, installed gas oven ✗ Installed walk-in cooler room ✗ Installation of water pipes/wall plumbing for whitegoods and appliances