

Strategic Local Government Infrastructure Fund Guidelines

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Strategic Local Government Infrastructure Fund (SIF) program is to provide regional and shire councils the opportunity to apply for funding for local government infrastructure-related projects that are designed to boost the amenity and community development in regional and remote communities.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the program are to:

- Support the implementation of Northern Territory Government strategies and policies
- Assist delivery of key strategic infrastructure projects in regional and shire council plans
- Assist the improvement of community infrastructure across regional and shire councils
- Provide regional and shire councils with opportunities to leverage additional funding to assist with repairs and maintenance or development of infrastructure and other assets
- Provide regional and shire councils with opportunities to pool collaborative funding from government and non-government sources to progress key strategic infrastructure projects
- Improve the quality and safety of regional and shire councils' assets and infrastructure

3. Eligibility

To be eligible for this grant, the council must:

- Be a regional or shire council established under the Northern Territory *Local Government Act*.
- Have demonstrated that the grant application supports relevant Northern Territory Government strategies and policies
- Have acquitted previous grants from the Department of Housing and Community Development by the relevant due date and complied with accountability requirements
- Have adequately demonstrated that the grant will not duplicate funding already provided under this or other funding sources for the purpose intended

The application form must be accompanied by supporting documentation including:

- a. Quotes;
- b. Project Plan; and
- c. Budget.

4. Funding

The SIF funding pool is \$5 million per annum. There will be one round of funding per annum for applications and councils should note the funding pool available when considering the types and values of projects to apply for.

Co-contributions from councils and collaborative funding proposals from other sources are encouraged.

5. Purposes

For the development of applications, the following presents a guide with examples of the types of projects that would be eligible for approval, and is not an exhaustive list:

- Parks, playgrounds, sporting and recreational areas establishment/upgrades
- Re-sealing of internal community roads
- Storm water management
- Waste management sites establishment/upgrades
- Plant and equipment to improve local government service delivery
- Eligible cemetery infrastructure establishment/upgrades
- Community communications infrastructure establishment/upgrades
- Council offices and facilities repairs/maintenance in regional and remote communities
- Staff housing renovations/upgrades in regional and remote communities
- Swimming pool repairs and maintenance

If the proposed project relies on pre-conditions (such as the acquisition of a section 19 lease under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act*), then the application should not be submitted until there is conclusive evidence that the condition will not hinder the progress of the project funding being applied for.

Applications with components of an ongoing nature (eg salaries) will not be considered.

6. Applications

The SIF program is subject to one round of funding applications per annum, with applications being invited in August/ September each year. Organisations will be given approximately four to six weeks to develop and submit applications and no late applications will be accepted. The normal assessment and approval processes will then be undertaken.

A maximum of two (2) prioritised applications will be accepted per council per annum.

Applications must be accompanied by a least one recent quote and exclude any GST component. Administration and/or project management fees are not to be included as these are expected to be absorbed as “in-kind” contributions by council.

Incomplete applications will not be considered by the assessment panel.

Councils are strongly encouraged to discuss proposed applications with their relevant Department of Housing and Community Development regional office contacts or the Local Government Grants Unit prior to submission.

If a council wishes an unsuccessful or late application to be considered the following year, the council must update and re-submit the application within the required timeframe.

Completed applications are to be forwarded to e-mail address: lg.grants@nt.gov.au

7. Assessments

The assessment of applications will include consideration of the following:

- Alignment to Northern Territory Government strategies and policies
- Alignment with priorities as outlined in councils' annual regional or shire plans
- Local Authority/community endorsement of the benefits of the project
- Financial and/or in kind co-contributions to the project
- Regional equity of proposed projects
- Capacity for ongoing resourcing (where required) eg repairs and maintenance

Applications will be assessed by a panel comprising:

- representatives from the Department of Housing and Community Development and
- representatives from other relevant Northern Territory Government agencies (dependent on the nature of the application)

All applications are assessed in line with the above considerations and are prioritised on a Territory wide basis. When final assessments are made, recommendations for grant funding are forwarded to the Minister for Housing and Community Development for consideration. It is only upon the Minister's final approval that grant payments are made.

Successful applications will be advised by the Minister for Housing and Community Development and unsuccessful applications will be advised by the Department.

8. Payments

Once approved by the Minister for Housing and Community Development, successful applicants will receive the following:

- a letter from the Minister advising that the grant has been approved and
- a letter of offer, acceptance and acquittal form from the Department.

Prior to grant payments being processed, successful applicants must have complied with the following:

- ensure there are no outstanding grant acquittals to the Department, which prevents processing the payment of any approved grants

and

- return the signed acceptance form to the Department with appropriate signed authorisation.

9. Acquittals

- The grant funding must be fully expended within two (2) years of the receipt of funding as a failure to do so may result in the Department requesting the funds to be repaid
- Acquit all, partial or nil expenditure of the grant funding on or before 30 June each year for a period of two (2) years
- All approved projects are required to be procured in accordance with the *Local Government Act*
- The purpose for which grant funding is provided cannot be changed following the Minister for Housing and Community Development's approval, however, minor changes to the purpose of the approved project may be approved by the Department on application
- Unspent or surplus funds remaining may be required to be returned to the Department, to be considered on a case by case basis
- The Department reserves the right to request the full value of the grant to be returned if the council disposes of the asset within four (4) years of the payment of the grant.

10. Contact details

If you require further information please contact:

Mrs Donna Hadfield
A/Manager Grants
(w) 08 899 98820
(e-mail) donna.hadfield@nt.gov.au

11. Completed submissions

Completed applications are to be forwarded to e-mail address: lg.grants@nt.gov.au