

Local Government Special Purpose Grant - funding guidelines

1. Purpose

The local government Special Purpose Grant (SPG) is managed by the Department of Housing and Community Development (Department). The purpose of the SPG program is to allow recognised local governing bodies and other incorporated organisations providing local government services the opportunity to apply for funding to improve community infrastructure and local government service delivery outcomes.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the program are to:

- Support the implementation of key Northern Territory Government policy platforms
- Assist in the delivery of key outcomes outlined in the council's plans
- Assist in developing local government capacity to provide legitimate representation, effective governance, improved service delivery and sustainable development
- Assist local governing bodies and the constituent communities they represent to become stronger and self-sustaining
- Assist in the delivery of essential council infrastructure and services
- Provide a potential source of additional funding to those non local government bodies that provide local government/municipal services (e.g. trustees of reserves, cemetery trusts and the Local Government Association of the NT)

3. Eligibility

To be eligible for a special purpose grant, the organisation must:

- Be a recognised local governing body established under the *Local Government Act* or an incorporated organisation delivering local government/municipal services that are currently funded through the Local Government Division of the Department
- Have a current business, strategic or operational plan
- Have acquitted all previous grants relevant to this Department and complied with all other accountability requirements
- Have adequately demonstrated that the grant will not duplicate funding already provided under this or other funding sources for the purpose intended
- Have demonstrated that the grant application supports relevant Northern Territory Government strategies and policies
- The application pro-forma must be accompanied with supporting documentation including:
 - a. Quotes (screen dumps from web sites are not acceptable)
 - b. Project plans; and
 - c. Budgets.

4. Funding pool

There are two funding rounds per year with approximately 50% of the pool being allocated to each round. Organisations should be cognisant of the quantum of funds available when considering both the number and value of applications it intends to submit. Up to three applications can be submitted, and should be prioritised to assist the Department in the assessment process.

5. Purposes for which grants will be considered favourably

- Purchase of plant and equipment that will improve local government service delivery
- Staff housing on remote communities and general renovations/upgrades
- Upgrades for parks, sporting and recreational areas
- Supporting community infrastructure projects
- Addressing issues around anti-social behaviour and discourage acts of vandalism and graffiti in council park lands and open spaces
- Animal management programs

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 or delay the progress of the project funding being applied for.

6. Purposes for which grants have not been approved

Given the limited funding pool, it is unlikely that grants for the purposes outlined below will be successful.

- Purchase of vehicles (passenger carrying/recreational vehicles – 4WDs, troop carriers, buses, quad bikes etc.)
- Establishment of 'new' community dumps or remediation of existing dumps
- Payment of sitting fees, travel costs, accommodation or hospitality items for meetings
- Purposes that are of a recurrent nature and outside council budget (e.g. staff salaries)
- Road construction and/or repairs and maintenance
- Construction of swimming pools
- Purposes that are not related to local government services and that should be addressed by another government agency.

7. Application processes & timelines

The SPG Program is subject to two rounds of funding per financial year.

Round 1 – August / September

Round 2 – February / March

Organisations will be given approximately four weeks to develop and submit applications. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered by the assessment panel.

A maximum of three (3) prioritised applications will be accepted per round. All applications must be accompanied by a least one recent quote. Screen dumps from web sites are not acceptable.

The grant application must not include administration/project management fees. These are expected to be covered by the grant applicant.

All applications from local government councils must exclude any GST component.

Councils are strongly encouraged to discuss proposed applications with their relevant Department of Housing and Community Development regional office prior to submission. Other organisations can contact the Local Government Division (contact details provided below) to discuss their proposed applications prior to submission.

8. Assessment considerations

The assessment of applications will include consideration of the following:

- Community acceptance and benefit of the project
- Alignment to Northern Territory Government strategies and policies
- Alignment with the applicant's strategic priorities as outlined in annual plans
- Relative importance to the delivery of local government services
- Recognition will be given to issues of geographical and regional equity of proposed projects

9. Assessment process

Assessment of grant applications will only be undertaken after the closing date.

Grant applications are assessed by the Local Government Division of the Department taking into account the above assessment considerations and prioritised on an NT wide basis. Recommendations are then forwarded to the Minister for Housing and Community Development to make a final decision on successful projects.

The minister will advise applicants on the successful projects whilst the Department will advise of the unsuccessful projects.

10. Unsuccessful / late applications

No applications will be held over for future assessment by the Department.

If an organisation wishes for an unsuccessful or late application to be considered for the next round, then it is up to that organisation to re-submit its application within the required time-frame of the next grant round.

11. Process for payment

Once the minister has approved the successful projects, applicants will receive:

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

Prior to grant payments being processed, successful applicants must ensure they have no outstanding grant acquittals relevant to the Local Government Division of this Department. All outstanding acquittals will need to be submitted to the Department before payment will be made.

Successful organisations must sign the acceptance form with appropriate authorisation and return back to the Department.

11. Funds Management

- The purpose for which grant funding was applied for must be fully expended within two years of the receipt of funding. Failure to do so may result in the Department requesting the funds to be repaid
- Acquit all, partial or nil expenditure of the SPG as at 30 June by 31 July each year.
- All approved projects are required to be procured in accordance with the *Local Government Act* and the Northern Territory Government “Bought from a Territory Enterprise” policy if applicable.
- The purpose for which grant funding is provided cannot be changed following the Minister for Housing and Community Development’s approval. All funded projects must be completed according to the purpose on the grant application. Minor changes to the purpose of the approved project may be approved by the Department on application.
- Unspent funds will be required to be returned unless approved otherwise in writing by the Department.
- The Department reserves the right to request the full value of the grant to be returned if the organisation disposes of the asset acquired with the grant within four (4) years of the payment of the grant.

12. Contact details and Completed Submissions

If you require further information please contact:

Donna Hadfield
A/Manager Grants Program
(w) 08 8999 8820

Omor Robin
Grants and Compliance Officer
(w) 08 8999 8576

Completed applications are to be emailed to: lg.grants@nt.gov.au