

Disability Advocacy Futures Program 2025 Special Purposes and Projects and, Sector Development grant guidelines

Grant Program Guidelines

February 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Communities and Justice acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live. We celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

Disability Advocacy Futures Program 2024/25 Special Purposes and Projects and, Sector Development

Published by Department of Communities and Justice

dcj.nsw.gov.au

First published: February 2025

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Disability Advocacy Futures Program 2024/25 Special Purposes and Projects and, Sector Development Grant Program Guidelines

The Disability Advocacy Futures Program (DAFP) 2024/25 Special Purposes and Projects (SP&P) and Sector Development (SD) Grant Program Guidelines (Guidelines) contain information to assist potential applicants to complete the application.

These guidelines contain an overview of the grant program, information about the application process, eligibility and assessment criteria, how the funds can and cannot be used, and reporting requirements.

It is recommended that these guidelines are read prior to completing your application for the grant program.

1 Overview of the DAFP 2024/25 Special Purposes and Projects, and Sector Development grant (SP&P, SD)

In NSW, approximately 1.5 million people live with disability¹. Of those, approximately 13% are eligible for services and supports under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)².

In December 2019, the NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner³ recommended the establishment of the DAFP which commenced on 1 January 2022 and is funded until June 2026.

The DAFP provides funding to support people with disability navigate local services, organisations working towards long-term social change, and policy advocacy groups run by, or on behalf of, people with disability.

The DAFP SP&P and SD grants provides additional funding for areas of identified need and to build capacity of the advocacy sector.

Purpose of the DAFP Special Purposes and Projects and, Sector Development grant program

The Special Purposes and Projects grants aim to:

- support initiatives to assist people with disability in NSW to actively engage in their communities in a more informed and empowered way, for which alternative funding sources are not available.

The Sector Development grants aim to:

- drive quality improvement, collaboration and innovation among advocacy organisations, and to build stronger networks and learning opportunities.

¹ SDAC 2022 <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/latest-release>

² NDIS Quarterly Report as at 30 September, 2024

³ Review into Disability Advocacy in NSW “<https://www.ageingdisabilitycommission.nsw.gov.au/reports-and-submissions/review-into-disability-advocacy-in-nsw.html>”

Objectives and outcomes

Grant applications must demonstrate how the proposed project will contribute to the development of the NSW disability advocacy sector and assist people with disability to actively engage in their communities, by meeting **at least one** of the program objectives below.

The DAFP 2024/25 SP&P and SD grant program has 3 key objectives:

1. **Increase available supports to assist people with disability in NSW to actively engage in their communities in a more informed and empowered way.**
2. **Further develop the NSW disability advocacy sector through quality improvement, collaboration and innovation.**
3. **Build stronger networks and learning opportunities for the NSW disability advocacy sector.**

Target group

The DAFP 2024/25 SP&P and SD funding focuses on all people with disability in NSW who need support to access NSW Government funded or provided services, whether or not they are NDIS participants. Where relevant, it may also target and prioritise specific communities and disability types.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must be from:

Incorporated not-for-profit community organisations with capacity to contract for services..

For the purposes of this grant, organisations deemed to be ‘incorporated not-for-profit community organisations’ include:

- incorporated organisations that are registered and approved as not-for-profit bodies by NSW Fair Trading
- not-for profit companies limited by guarantee, registered in NSW (must have ACNC registration and/or DGR status)
- Indigenous Corporations (must be registered with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations)
- NSW Local Aboriginal Land Councils
- religious organisations operating in NSW
- NSW non-government organisations established under their own Act of Parliament.

The following are mandatory eligibility criteria:

- all applicants must have appropriate insurance of \$10 million
- all applicants must address the NSW National Redress Scheme sanctions
- applications will not be accepted from organisations that have outstanding acquittals with DCJ.

Assessment Criteria

Eligible organisations must meet the following assessment criteria to be considered for funding:

Demonstrated ability to meet the grant objectives and outcomes.

Your response to this criterion must:

- detail how your delivery of this Grant Program will ensure quality, positive and sustainable outcomes for people with disability and their families and carers
- explain how the Grant Program outcomes will be measured, specifically how quality outcomes will be met and monitored.

Demonstrated value for money and capacity to deliver projects/activities for the target group(s).

Your response to this criterion must:

- provide a detailed description of your business framework, model of service delivery and processes involved in providing the service
- explain and include examples of the activities and programs established to address the need of your target group
- outline your target group
- provide a proposed timeline of delivery of your project
- explain why your model of delivery requires the level of funding requested

Demonstrated experience working with the target group(s) and ability to collaborate and consult with relevant stakeholders.

Your response to this criterion must:

- discuss your experience in delivering services to the target cohort or capacity and experience to carry out the work proposed.
- detail the existing stakeholders and any partnership relationships which will assist to deliver the proposed initiative
- detail community links and engagement with relevant stakeholders (including government and non-government organisations).

Prioritisation

The grant will prioritise the target groups listed below:

- children with disability and their carers/families
- Aboriginal people
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or asexual (LGBTIQA+)
- people in rural, regional and remote areas.

Assessment

Applications will be assessed against eligibility, prioritisation and assessment criteria. An assessment team will review the applications and make recommendations to the Panel that will include one independent member.

The Panel will make recommendations to the DCJ Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning as delegated decision maker.

2 Funding amounts

One off funding amounts will be available under the categories totalling up to \$1,000,000 for this program, including:

1. **Category 1: Special Purposes and Projects** grants are for new innovative projects from \$20,000 (minimum) up to \$100,000 (maximum).
2. **Category 2: Sector Development** grants are for new innovative projects from \$20,000 (minimum) up to \$100,000 (maximum).

More than one application can be submitted for consideration by an applicant. However, not all applications will be successful as each application will be considered individually through a competitive merit-based assessment.

In the application form, applicants will be asked to prioritise their applications if more than one application is submitted. It is unlikely that an organisation will receive funding for more than one project in each category.

Grant funding received must be expended within 12 months of receipt of funding.

DCJ may vary the distribution of grants depending on the number of funding applications submitted. DCJ may also offer successful applicants a grant lower than the amount requested.

3 Grant funds expenditure

Funds can only be used for expenses/activities directly associated to the grant. Your application must clearly outline your proposed expenditure in relation to the funding amounts identified above and included in the budget you submit with your application.

4 Grant fund exclusions

Organisations must use the grant funds, including any interest earned, for the purposes of the grant.

For example, items or activities that funding cannot be used for including:

- any activity of a commercial nature that is for profit
- existing debt or budget deficits
- retrospective costs
- capital works, including building work
- permanent salaries/wages (costs for temporary tutors/instructors for your program or activity can be included)

- permanent equipment purchases, for example tables and computers
- purchase of a vehicle or associated costs
- business as usual costs or general operating expenses
- programs or activities that encourage gambling such as bingo, or the consumption of alcohol
- programs and activities coordinated by NSW Government Departments and Statutory Authorities
- the same project twice, for example, two different organisations cannot apply for funds for the same program or activity.

5 Application process

All applications for grant funding are managed using the SmartyGrants portal and will be assessed based on eligibility and assessment criteria.

- Applications will open 18th February 2025; and close 5pm on 25th March 2025.
- Applications will initially be reviewed by DCJ for general program compliance and then assessed.
- Applicants will be formally notified by 30 April 2025 if their application has been successful or unsuccessful.

Note for all applicants:

- Applicants must ensure that their contact details are up to date.
- Applicants must not have any outstanding acquittals for any other funding program with DCJ.

6 Summary of assessment process:

Applications will be reviewed by the eligibility team for eligibility and compliance with guidelines and eligible criteria. They will then be subject to the assessment process which will include assessment by the Assessment Team and recommendations to the Assessment Panel.

The DCJ Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning will be the decision-maker.

Applicants will be formally notified on whether their application has been successful. It is an applicant's responsibility to ensure all contact details are up to date.

7 Subcontracting information

DCJ will only provide a grant to a single organisation. Organisations can work together through one lead organisation using subcontracting arrangements between them.

For more information about subcontracting please refer to the Grant Program FAQ's and the DCJ subcontracting policy.

8 NSW National Redress Scheme sanctions

The NSW Government will not award a Grant Funding Arrangement to a non-government organisation with Redress Obligation (or to any of its Related Entities) if that non-government organisation:

- has declined to join the Scheme, or
- at the expiry of six months after the time it is notified to join the Scheme, has failed to do so.

Visit the website for further information about the [NSW National Redress Scheme](#) sanctions.

9 Insurance

Grant recipients must maintain current and adequate insurance appropriate to the activities/services funded under this grant to cover any liability of the grant recipient that might arise in connection with the performance of its obligations under a Grant Funding Agreement. This must include but is not limited to a minimum of \$10 million Public Liability Insurance.

Applicants will be asked to provide a copy of all relevant insurance policies and certificates in the application form.

You must provide evidence of the above insurance for an amount recommended by a professional insurance adviser, or any such other insurance policies as may reasonably be required by DCJ, and as required by law, for you and any of your employees or sub-contractors, in relation to 8 the performance of the services.

If your organisation is not covered by the appropriate insurance, you will need to approach another organisation (such as your local council or an incorporated not-for-profit) to sponsor your application so that your project will be covered under their insurance.

10 Banking details

It is your responsibility as the applicant to provide correct banking details, including the authorised signature to verify your bank details in the application form. Funds transferred to an incorrect bank account may not be recoverable.

11 Successful applicants – Grant Funding Agreement.

The application, Grant Funding Agreement and acquittal for the grant will be managed using the SmartyGrants management system.

Successful applicants are required to return the signed Grant Funding Agreement within two weeks of receipt.

Agreements can only be signed by authorised officers of your organisation. This may be a member of the executive/committee as deemed under the Articles of Association or Constitution for a not-for-profit organisation, or the General Manager or delegated officer if you are a council.

Please note, all applicants must provide the contact details (email address, phone number, name and position) of the relevant authorised signatories, or their delegates, in their application form.

It is the applicants' responsibility to ensure staff availability to complete and sign documents, to carefully read the terms and conditions of the Grant Funding Agreement, and to sign the Grant Funding Agreement using the correct authorised signatories.

Once we receive your signed Grant Funding Agreement, DCJ will countersign the agreement and return it to you by email.

Any variations to the Grant Funding Agreement, including scope, location or time frames outlined in the application form and Grant Program Guidelines must be formally requested and approved in writing. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of the grant offer.

To discuss a variation, please contact the Disability Data, Engagement and Advocacy team by email at DAFP@dcj.nsw.gov.au or the Grants team by email at GrantDesignandSupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au.

12 Successful applicants' obligations and reporting

Any variations to the approved project scope, project location and completion time frames outlined in the original application form must be formally requested and approved in writing before any related work takes place. This is done in your submission tab in the SmartyGrants portal

All projects must be completed within 12 months of receipt of funding. You are required to submit a Final Completion Report in SmartyGrants no later than 30 July 2026. DCJ will send you the final acquittal form prior the required date that you will need to complete in the SmartyGrants portal.

All projects will be required to provide DCJ with a mid-term report via SmartyGrants templates.

Please note that any photographs or videos containing images of participants and/or staff submitted in the Final Completion Report must be accompanied by a signed DCJ - still and moving images consent form.

It is a requirement that all financial records related to grant expenditure and acquittal be retained by the committee of the organisation for seven years. If the committee changes, these documents must be forwarded to the new incoming committee.

13 Timeframes

Date	Event/Action
18 February 2025	Grant applications open
25 March 2025	Grant applications close
April 2025	Assessment of grant applications
May 2025	Advice to all applicants
May 2025	Grant Funding Agreements with successful applicants and project payment
June 2025	Grant program results published and Ministerial announcement
June 2025	Projects commence
June 2026	Projects end
July 2026	Final Report and Acquittal due to DCJ

14 Feedback and appeals process

If your application is not successful, it does not mean your application is without merit. Funding is limited and not all applications are successful. Due to the high-volume applications, we are unable to provide individual feedback on each unsuccessful application.

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