Communities and Justice

Aboriginal Throughcare Strategy Healing at Home on Country, Community-Based Aboriginal Elders &Mentors Grant Program

Frequently Asked Questions ‘FAQs’

April 2026

NSW GOVERNMENT

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.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contributed to the development of this document.

We advise this resource may contain images, or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

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Aboriginal Throughcare Strategy Healing at Home on Country, Community-Based Aboriginal Elders & Mentors Grant Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Introduction

The Aboriginal Throughcare Strategy Healing at Home on Country, Community-Based Aboriginal Elders & Mentors Grant Program FAQ lists the most commonly asked questions and responses regarding the grant program and are developed to assist potential applicants.

FAQ topics and questions

These FAQs are for the Aboriginal Throughcare Strategy Healing at Home on Country, Community-Based Aboriginal Elders & Mentors Grant Program and are intended to accompany the Aboriginal Throughcare Strategy Healing at Home on Country, Community-Based Aboriginal Elders & Mentors Grant Program Guidelines. Questions and answers below are grouped in topics in the same order as they appear in the Guidelines.

Overview of the Grant Program

Q: What is the Aboriginal Throughcare Strategy Healing at Home on Country, Community-Based Aboriginal Elders & Mentors **Grant Program?**

Healing at Home on Country, Community-based Aboriginal Elders & Mentors Program aims to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults in custody by providing resources to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to develop and deliver culturally appropriate, community-led programs that effectively address and reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults returning to custody in NSW. The strategy seeks to support rehabilitation and reintegration through culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches, while also enhancing partnerships, governance, and accountability in alignment with the Closing the Gap Targets and Priority Reforms.

Q: What are the aims and objectives of the Program?

Healing at Home on Country, Community-based Aboriginal Elders & Mentors Program is one of four activities for Corrective Services to receive funding under the NSW Close the Gap Aboriginal Throughcare Strategy. The Aboriginal Throughcare Strategy aims to increase the availability of culturally appropriate supports for Aboriginal children and adults while in and after leaving prison and expand the involvement of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs). This will enable Aboriginal adults to exit custody and safely reintegrate into community.

Project objectives/targeted outcome 1

Delivering tailored, culturally safe and ACCO led health and wellbeing services that assist Aboriginal people in custody in addressing the underlying factors contributing to offending behaviour.

Detail:

- Client's case plans incorporate culturally appropriate referral pathways for clients re-integrating back into community.
- Strengthened relationship between Community Corrections and their local ACCO's.

Project objectives/targeted outcome 2

Resourcing the ACCO sector to increase the availability of Aboriginal delivered post-release, transitional and supported accommodation and cultural mentoring services for Aboriginal adults leaving custody.

Detail:

- ACCO's have programs and services available for clients to address their holistic care.

Project objectives/targeted outcome 3

Strengthening the opportunities for Aboriginal people, organisations and communities to practice self-determination in determining the solutions to reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system.

Detail:

- ACCOs submit their application for the grant by outlining their project plan based on community needs.

Project objectives/targeted outcome 4

Increase co-design and collaboration with local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

Detail:

- Improved relationships between CSNSW and ACCO's in conjunction with improved cultural competence and confidence in CSNSW staff, promotes collaboration in developing purpose-built programs for mutual clients.

Project objectives/targeted outcome 5

Aboriginal parolees have a voice and input in their Risk Mitigation and Case Plan for post release planning.

Detail:

- Aboriginal clients having person centred and culturally responsive case plans.
- Aboriginal clients actively engaging in interventions outlined in case plan steps.
- Aboriginal clients contributing to the development of their case plans and being able to select what services they wish to engage with.

Project objectives/targeted outcome 6

Aboriginal parolees have cultural programs/activities in their case plan to promote self-determination identity and belonging for connection to Family, Community & Culture

Detail:

- Community Corrections improving the way they engage and provide services to Aboriginal people in their care.

Project objectives/targeted outcome 7

Aboriginal parolees are empowered by local Aboriginal mentors to build connection and well-being for successful reintegration back into Family & Community.

Detail:

- Aboriginal parolees are supported by Aboriginal mentors after successful completion of their parole orders.
- Aboriginal parolees are connected to cultural activities and events in community to promote a sense of identity, belonging, connection and pride.

Project objectives/targeted outcome 8

Reduce re-offending and increase successful completions of parole for Aboriginal people in our care.

Detail:

- Qualitative and quantitative data reflects improvement in the number of Aboriginal parolees successfully completing their parole period.

Completing the application queries

Q: Do I have to use SmartyGrants to apply?

A: Yes, applications for this program will only be accepted that are submitted via the SmartyGrants platform.

Q: Can I review the application form before starting my application?

A: Yes, when you log on to SmartyGrants and view the application you can also choose to download as a PDF to review whenever you like. You can also preview the form online. Please note that PDF copies of application forms do not show which questions are conditional, so you may see questions that do or do not apply to your organisation.

Q: Can I provide letters of support or references to support my application?

A: Yes, and you will be prompted to do so on the application form.

Q: Is there support available to help me apply or answer questions?

A: Applicants with any queries regarding the application process can contact the Grant Design and Support at grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au. Please quote your Application ID in all correspondence.
A: Applicants with any queries regarding the SmartyGrants management system, please refer to the SmartyGrants Help Guide for Applicants or you can also contact SmartyGrants directly if you are having technical difficulties with the application form or your SmartyGrants account/password, for contact details visit their help page.
A: Applicants with queries regarding the Aboriginal Throughcare Strategy Healing at Home on Country, Community-Based Aboriginal Elders & Mentors Grant Program should contact accu@correctiveservices.nsw.gov.au.

Q: Can we submit more than one application?

A: Typically, the answer is no.

Q. What is the difference between an ACCO and other organisations that serve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?

A: Please refer to our page on Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), which also provides information on our commitment to building the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector.

Q. Should we include GST in our application?

A: Your funding request should exclude any GST that you will be charged by contractors or suppliers as part of the cost/delivery. If your application is successful and your organisation's ABN is registered for GST, you will be paid GST on top of the approved grant amount. If your organisation ABN is not registered for GST or you do not have an ABN, you will only be paid the approved grant amount.

Q: Who needs to sign off on our application?

A: The Applicant Declaration must be made by two of your organisation's authorised signatories, who will also be responsible for signing the Grant Funding Agreement via DocuSign or Adobe Acrobat Sign should your application be successful More information on DCJ authorised signatories is available on the DCJ website. Please note, you must provide the contact details (email address, phone number, name and position) of the relevant authorised signatories, or their delegates, in your application form. Please contact grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au immediately if these details change.

Q: Why would we want to provide the details of a third (optional) person in our application form to view the Grant Funding Agreement?

A: DCJ administers Grant Funding Agreements to successful organisations via DocuSign or Adobe Acrobat Sign, which only allows those who receive an individualised link to access the document for viewing. Therefore, all of those who wish to either sign or view the Grant Funding Agreement must provide their contact details. You may wish to include any relevant legal or administrative staff to review a copy of the Grant Funding Agreement before it is signed.

Q: Can value-in-kind be considered as funding contributed by a not-for-profit organisation?

A: Yes. Donated materials and contributions by paid staff and volunteers of the organisation are allowed as part of the not-for-profit organisation's contribution to the cost of a project. The estimated value of these contributions should be provided in the project budget.

Q: Is it too late to apply?

A: Applications that are late or incorrectly filled out or incomplete will not be accepted. You may add additional information or direction as appropriate for the grant program.

Completing the application - one stage process

Q: How do I apply for a one stage application process?

- You can log in to SmartyGrants on the link provided.
- You are not required to complete your application in one sitting, you can save and return at a later date to complete and submit.
- Once your application has been submitted you will receive an automated response from SmartyGrants. If you have not received this email, your application has not been successfully submitted, or the confirmation email has ended up in your junk mailbox.
- You can also log in to the online system and click 'My Submissions' to view all submitted and unsubmitted applications. Submitted applications are identified by a green tick. Carefully check your application prior to submitting. If you realise that you have made an error once you have submitted your application please contact grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au for assistance before the closing date.
- Applications that are late or incorrectly filled out or incomplete will not be accepted.

Eligibility and assessment criteria

Q: What are the eligibility criteria?

A: All applicants are required to meet the following eligibility criteria:

- To be eligible to apply for the grant program you must be:
- a not-for-profit Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) based in NSW.
- An Aboriginal specific sole provider
- Definition of an ACCO as set out in the Clause 44 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap
- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community control is an act of self-determination. Under this Agreement, an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Organisation delivers services, including land and resource management that builds the strength and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people and is:*
- incorporated under relevant legislation and not-for-profit
- controlled and operated by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people

- connected to the community, or communities, in which they deliver the services
- governed by a majority Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander governing body (51%).

  Please see the link for further information on how DCJ defines and works with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

A not-for-profit Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) includes:

- Indigenous Corporations (must be registered with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC);
- the NSW Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC).
- Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of NSW (AH&MRC).
- National Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO).
- be able to enter into a grant funding agreement with Department of Communities and Justice
- have an Australian bank account
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- have appropriate insurance; this must include but is not limited to a minimum of $10 million Public Liability Insurance
- address the NSW National Redress Scheme sanctions (included in this template)
- must not have any outstanding acquittals with the Department of Communities and Justice,

Applicants or their partnering organisation must:

- address the NSW National Redress Scheme sanctions.
- not have outstanding acquittals with DCJ.
- be an organisation based in NSW for projects to be carried out in NSW.
- maintain adequate and current insurance cover including, but not limited to Workers Compensation Insurance, Professional Indemnity Insurance, Personal Accident Insurance.
- have public liability insurance of at least $10 million per claim or be willing to purchase it.

Ineligible applicants

You are not eligible if you are:

- An individual and not an Aboriginal specific sole provider.
- Federal and State Government agencies and bodies.
- NSW educational facilities (public schools, private schools, TAFE).
- For-profit non-Aboriginal businesses.
- Unincorporated organisations or groups without an eligible subcontracting organisation.
- Organisations that have not met project requirements, including acquittal and reporting, for funding received from DCJ in the previous two years.

- Organisations with Redress Obligations under the National Redress Scheme that have not joined the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse).
- have overdue acquittals with DCJ
- Do not have appropriate insurance; this must include but is not limited to a minimum of $10 million Public Liability Insurance.

Q: What are the assessment criteria?

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

This is an open competitive grant program. All submitted applications will first be screened for eligibility.

Eligible applications will then be assessed based on the following assessment criteria:

1. **Relevance**: The proposed activity clearly aligns with the objectives and meets the specific outcomes of the grant program.
2. **Impact**: The project will produce clear, positive results. You need to show proof of past and current success, or the potential to achieve these results.
3. **Implementation**: The applicant has the necessary experience and resources to complete the project on time and within the budget, ensuring good participation and value for money.

Q: Are there any funding priorities for the grants program?

A: Yes, prioritisation will be given to projects that demonstrate creative and innovative ideas that support successful reintegration and holistic care for Aboriginal people released on Parole Orders. Applications may also be prioritised geographically to support an equitable spread of funds and projects across NSW.

What grant funds can be used for

Q: What can we use the grant funds for?

A: Funds can only be used for expenses and 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.

This may include:

- Limits for purchasing equipment
- Minor expenses for service delivery such as purchasing phone credit or internet
- Resources to support effective facilitation of the program. For example but not limited to; the cost of running transport for participants or costs associated with facility bookings.

Q: What are we not allowed to spend grant funding on?

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

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
- 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
- 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

Q: Can we receive funding if we've already received an insurance payment, government grant or government funding?

A: No.

Q: Can we apply for a project that has already started?

A: No.

Q: What is subcontracting?

A:. For the purposes of these grants, "subcontracting" refers to an arrangement between your organisation and one or more other organisations/individuals (referred to as "subcontractors") to assist your organisation to provide services funded through your grant. In some cases, all the service delivery may be undertaken by the subcontractor. A subcontracting arrangement requires the eligible organisation to enter into an agreement with the subcontractor to conduct the work, but the applicant (lead) organisation will retain the contractual obligations to DCJ under the Grant Funding Agreement for delivery and accountability. For this reason, it's important you carry out the necessary due diligence before entering into such an agreement and applying for a grant on one or more subcontractors' behalf'.

Q. What is the difference between an ACCO and other organisations that serve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?

A: Please refer to our page on Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), which also provides information on our commitment to building the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector.

Q: Is subcontracting the same as auspicing?

A: Yes, Please note the term "subcontracting" is used for the purposes of this grant program.

Q: What does 'Minor expenses' mean?

A: Minor expenses for service delivery such as purchasing phone credit or internet etc.

Other requirements

Q: What insurance is my organisation required to maintain?

A: Your organisation:

- is required to provide a valid Certificate of Currency for Public Liability Insurance with a minimum cover of $10 million in your organisation's name, which you will upload as part of your application
- must retain any other insurance required under Commonwealth and NSW law for the performance of its activities funded by this grant, if successful
- is responsible for ensuring it has appropriate and current insurance coverage in place to cover any liability of the grant recipient that might arise in connection with the performance of its obligations under its Grant Funding Agreement, which includes activities carried out by any other individual or organisation that you may subcontract.

Q: What is the NSW National Redress Scheme?

A: The National Redress Scheme is part of the Commonwealth Government's response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The National Redress Scheme provides support to people who experienced institutional child sexual abuse.

The Scheme:

- Acknowledges that many children were sexually abused in Australian institutions.
- Holds institutions accountable for this abuse; and
- Helps people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse gain access to counselling, a direct personal response, and a Redress payment.

The Scheme started on 1 July 2018 and will run for 10 years. The NSW Government will not award a grant 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.

For further information please visit the NSW National Redress Scheme Sanctions Policy webpage.

Q: Do I need to provide banking details?

A: Yes. It is your responsibility to provide the correct banking details, including the authorised signature to verify your bank details, in your application form. Funds transferred to an incorrect bank account may not be recoverable. This applies even if you have provided your banking details to DCJ in the past or are currently receiving other payments from DCJ.

Q: Why should I keep my contact details up to date?

A: Your application, Grant Funding Agreement and acquittal for the grants will be managed using the SmartyGrants online grants administration system and DocuSign. We will contact you and your organisation's authorised signatories using the details provided in your application on SmartyGrants.

It is the responsibility of the grant recipient to keep DCJ up to date with any change in contact information, including the contact details of authorised signatories. DCJ is not responsible for any consequences should your grant offer be withdrawn due to out-of-date contact details in SmartyGrants. Please email grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au to update contact details.

Assessment process

Q: What is the assessment process?

A: 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 Recommendation Panel.

The Delegated Corrective Services officer will be the decision-maker.
All 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.

Note for all applicants:

- All applications for grant funding are managed using the SmartyGrants portal.
- Applicants must ensure that their contact details are up to date.

After applications close

Q: What happens when you receive my application?

A: Applicants will be formally notified by August 2026 if their application has been successful or unsuccessful. Applicants must ensure their contact details on SmartyGrants remain up to date.

Q: Will the information in my application be kept confidential?

A: Information received in applications and in respect of applications is treated as confidential, and all assessors will sign a confidentiality agreement before reviewing your application. However, documents in the possession of the government are subject to the provisions of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*. If you are successful, the NSW Government may share or publicise information on your program. An agreement that this may occur will form part of your Grants Funding Agreement.

Q: When will I know if my application was successful?

A: You will be notified via email by August 2026. Applicants must ensure their contact details on SmartyGrants remain up to date.

Q: If I'm successful, what happens then?

A: You will be notified via email by August 2026 and shortly after a Grant Funding Agreement will be sent via DocuSign or Adobe Acrobat Sign to the authorised signatories, and any additional

reviewers, as provided in your application form. Successful applicants are required to return the signed Funding Agreement within seven days of receipt.

Grant Funding 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 if you are a not-for-profit organisation.

Please refer to the following for further details on authorised signatories and delegation. Please note, you must provide the contact details (email address, phone number, name, and position) of the relevant authorised signatories, or their delegates, in your application form.

Please contact grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au immediately if these details change. It is your 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 via DocuSign or Adobe Acrobat Sign, your Grant Funding Agreement will be countersigned and sent to you by email.

Q: What happens if situations change, and we wish to change the details of our program after we receive funding?

A: Any major variations to the approved purposes outlined in your original application form on SmartyGrants must be formally requested and approved in writing before any related work takes place, as your application form will form part of your legally binding Grant Funding Agreement with DCJ. Failure to do so may result in you being required to return the grant monies in full. To discuss a variation, please contact the Grants team by email grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au.

Q: What reporting will be required?

The successful grant recipient is required to submit the following:

- All projects must be completed by 30 September 2027.
- You are required to submit a final report it must provide a comprehensive summary of outcomes achieved throughout the project. It should detail the extent to which the grant funding contributed to these outcomes, including an assessment of impact, sustainability, and community benefit. Recipient is encouraged to include stories or case studies that illustrate community impact, highlight lessons learned, and demonstrate how the project has created meaningful change.

Q: What acquittals requirements?

A: The Financial Acquittal must show how funds were spent to be submitted no later than 30 October 2027. DCJ will send you the final report and acquittal form prior the required date that you will need to complete in the SmartyGrants portal.

Please note that any photographs or videos containing images of participants and/or staff submitted in the Final 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.

Q: Why was my application not successful?

A: 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, DCJ is unable to provide individual feedback on each unsuccessful application.

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