

Communities and Justice on behalf of Corrective Services NSW

Aboriginal Throughcare Strategy Healing at Home on Country, Community-Based Aboriginal Elders & Mentors grant program guidelines.

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## Grant Program Guidelines

April 2026



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## Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Communities and Justice on behalf on NSW Corrective Services 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.

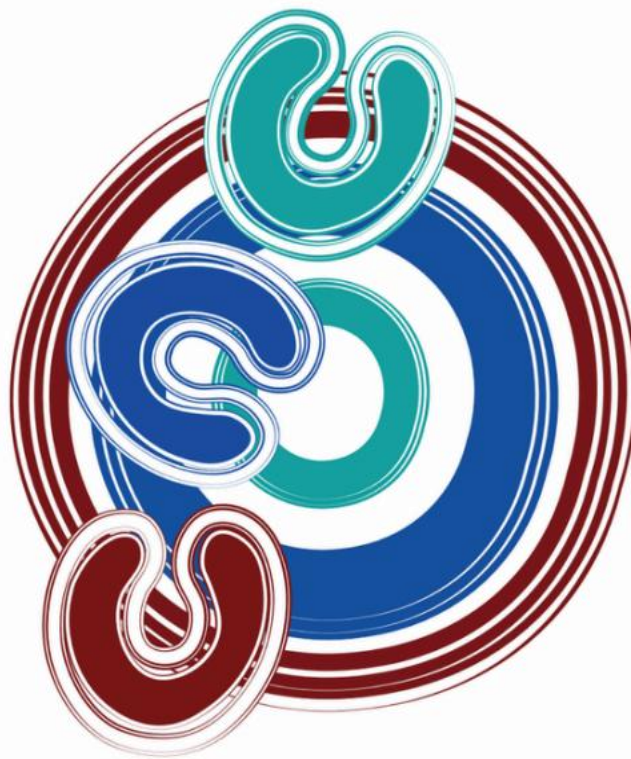
We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contributed to the development of this document.

We advise this resource may contain images, or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

Aboriginal Throughcare Strategy Healing at Home on Country, Community-Based Aboriginal Elders & Mentors grant program guidelines.

Published by Department of Communities and Justice on behalf of Corrective Services NSW.

First published: April 2026



This visual identity represents the Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW), Aboriginal Strategy Directorate. Each circle has a three circled edge, as it reaches outward embracing community and stakeholders, building authentic relationships and growing cultural competency, leading to shared vision and deeper understanding. People symbols rising upwards, depict Aboriginal people and communities, going forward, as they are guided, supported and embraced throughout their journey to achieve community connected impactful results championed by the Directorate.

### Copyright and disclaimer

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# 1 Key dates and Information

Grant applications open	4 May 2026
Grant applications close	30 June 2026
Assessment of submitted applications	July 2026
Notification of application outcomes	August 2026
Project Service Delivery commences	1 September 2026
Project Service Delivery concludes	30 September 2027
Final report and financial acquittal due	30 October 2027
Decision maker	Corrective Services Delegated decision maker
NSW Government Agency	NSW Department of Communities and Justice on behalf of Corrective Services
Type of grant opportunity	Open Competitive
Total grant value	\$265,000 (excl. GST)
Program enquiries	<a href="mailto:accu@correctiveservices.nsw.gov.au">accu@correctiveservices.nsw.gov.au</a>
Technical enquiries	<a href="mailto:grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au">grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au</a>

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## 2 Overview

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### 2.1 Healing at Home on Country, Aboriginal Elders & Mentors Grant Program

The 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.

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### 2.2 Purpose of the Grant 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.

This grant provides a platform to be innovative, think outside the square and tailor a program to meet the needs of your communities.

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### 2.3 Objectives and outcomes

Eligible projects will need to contribute to, at least, one of the following outcomes:

#### **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:*

- Evaluation measures need to be both qualitative and quantitative and reflect improvement in the engagement and number of Aboriginal parolees successfully completing their parole period.

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## 2.4 Target group

The target group for the Healing at Home on Country Grant Program is:

- Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations
- Aboriginal specific sole trader

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## 3 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
- Willing to work in partnership with Community, Corrective Services NSW

### 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).

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### 3.1 Other mandatory criteria

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.

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## 4 Assessment Criteria

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.

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### 4.1 Prioritisation

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.

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## 5 Funding amounts

One-off funding for 12 months is available to the successful recipients. Applicants can apply for a grant amount ranging from a minimum \$5,000 up to \$10,000.

- Corrective Services may offer successful applicants a package lower than the amount requested.
- Grant funding must be spent by 30 September 2027.

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## 5.1 Grant funds expenditure

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.

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## 5.2 Grant fund exclusions

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

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## 5.3 Unspent project funds

If a grant recipient's project is completed and there are unspent project funds remaining, these must be returned to NSW Department of Communities and Justice unless otherwise specified in the grant funding agreement if more than \$250.

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# 6 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 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.

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## 6.1 Decision Making

The Delegated Corrective Services officer is the final decision-maker for funding as defined in the Initiation to launch briefing note. Briefing note with recommendations sent to Delegated Corrective Services officer and announcement posted on the NSW Grant Funding Finder. The delegated officer will consider the recommendations of the recommendation panel in this decision-making.

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## 6.2 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.

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## 6.3 Insurance

Successful 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 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.

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.

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## 6.4 Banking details

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

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# 7 Successful grant applications

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## 7.1 Grant Funding Agreement

Successful applicants are required to:

- Enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with NSW Department of Communities and Justice on behalf of Corrective Services NSW within four weeks of the grant offer being made.
- return the signed Grant Funding Agreement within four weeks of receipt. If you do not return your grant agreement by this date your grant will be forfeited.
- The application, Grant Funding Agreement and acquittal for the grant will be managed using the SmartyGrants management system.
- Start and complete funded activities and events within the dates specified in the Grant Funding Agreement.
- Seek approval from NSW Department of Communities and Justice on behalf of Corrective Services NSW for any proposed changes to a funded activity prior to the proposed changes being made via a variation submission in your SmartyGrants portal. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of the grant offer.
- Project variations may be accepted where the requested change aligns with the Program Guidelines and the original intent of the approved project.
- 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 individual and unique 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 via Adobe Acrobat Sign, DCJ will countersign the agreement and return to you an executed copy.
- Acknowledge the support of the NSW Government in accordance with the Grant Funding Agreement.
- Acknowledgement Guidelines: *"The NSW Government proudly supports this community-led partnership with funding provided under Healing at Home on Country Aboriginal Elders and Mentors Grants Program."*
- **To discuss a variation**, please contact the Healing at Home on Country project lead [accu@correctiveservices.nsw.gov.au](mailto:accu@correctiveservices.nsw.gov.au) or [grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au](mailto:grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au)

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## 7.2 Obligations and reporting

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.
- 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.

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## 8 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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## 9 Publication of grant information

The NSW Grant Administration Guide requires that certain information is published in relation to grants awarded no later than 45 calendar days after the grant agreement takes effect (see section 6.5 of the Guide and Appendix A to the Guide). This information is also open access under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) (GIPA Act), which must be made publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.

In accordance with these requirements, relevant information about the grants awarded will be made available on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder as soon as possible after the grant funding is approved or declined.

All records in relation to this decision will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the State Records Act 1998 (NSW).

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## 10 Additional information

### 10.1 Complaint handling

Any complaints should be sent in writing to [GrantDesignandSupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au](mailto:GrantDesignandSupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au)

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## 10.2 Access to information

Note that documents submitted as part of a grant application may be subject to an application under the GIPA Act or an order for papers under Standing Order 52.

The GIPA Act provides for the proactive release of government information by agencies and gives members of the public an enforceable right to access government information held by an agency (which includes Ministerial offices). Access to government information is only to be restricted if there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

Before information is released in response to an application under the GIPA Act, there will be an assessment of the public interest considerations in favour of and against disclosure of that information, and there may be consultation requirements that apply.

The NSW Legislative Council has the power to order the production of State papers by the Executive Government. Standing Order 52 provides that the House may order documents to be tabled by the Government in the House. The Cabinet Office coordinates the preparation of the papers – that is, the return to order. The return to order may contain privileged and public documents. Privileged documents are available only to members of the Legislative Council.

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## 10.3 Ethical conduct

### Conflict of interest management

Conflicts of Interest between DCJ, Corrective Services NSW and applicants will be managed in accordance with the DCJ's code of conduct, and declarations are made and recorded by all persons involved in performing functions related to the assessment process.

### Confidentiality

DCJ and Corrective Services staff who assist an applicant with an application will not be involved in the assessment for that application.

Information relating to the successful applications, including the name of the applicant, description of the funded project and the funding amount, will be included in:

- Public media releases.
- An announcement on the DCJ website.
- The NSW Grants finder website.
- DCJ social media.
- Corrective Services social media.

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## 10.4 Disclaimer

Every effort has been made to ensure that this publication is free from error and/or omission at the date of publication. The authors, publisher and any person involved in the preparation of this publication take no responsibility for loss occurring to any person acting or refraining from action because of information contained herein.

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## 10.5 Accessibility

Grant Design and Support team can provide grant information and application forms in accessible formats on request. Formats include word documents, audio disk and large print. We also accept applications in accessible formats.

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## 10.6 Support available to applicants

For questions regarding the grant and related information, support is available by emailing Healing at Home on Country Aboriginal Elders and Mentors grant program lead via email [accu@correctiveservices.nsw.gov.au](mailto:accu@correctiveservices.nsw.gov.au).

While staff will be pleased to answer questions about the application process, they cannot comment on the content of the application. To maintain a fair and equitable process, staff are unable to edit or correct any applications.

For queries regarding Smarty Grants, please contact the DCJ Grant Design and Support by emailing [grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au](mailto:grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au)

## Communities and Justice on behalf on Corrective Services NSW

6 Parramatta Square  
10 Darcy Street  
Parramatta NSW 2150

Locked Bag 5000  
Parramatta 2124

Office hours:  
Monday to Friday  
9:00am – 5:00pm

E: [grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au](mailto:grantdesignandsupport@dcj.nsw.gov.au)

