



**ACT**  
Government

# 2026 ACT Reconciliation Day Grants Program

## Grant Guidelines

Applications open: 12 noon Tuesday 4 November 2025

Applications close: 3pm Tuesday 6 January 2026

## Accessibility Information

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- If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like to receive this publication in an **alternative format** – such as large print or audio – please telephone **13 34 27**.
- If English is not your first language and you require the **translating and interpreting services** – please telephone **13 14 50**.
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# 2026 ACT Reconciliation Day Grants Program

## 1 Introduction

The ACT Reconciliation Day Grants Program (the Grants or the Grant Program) directly aligns with the Core Focus Area of Cultural Integrity from the *ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028*, which aims to support a society that fosters the aspirations of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and contributes to the building of respectful, fair, and sustainable communities.

Reconciliation is about building relationships, respect and trust between the broader Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Reconciliation is not just about one day each year – rather it is a movement about addressing cultural change, attitudes, and beliefs to raise our community’s understanding of our shared history.

The inaugural ACT Reconciliation Day initiative: *Reconciliation in the Park* was held on Monday 29 May 2018 at Glebe Park in the City.

The ACT Government continues to support community conversation about Reconciliation at events across the Canberra Region.

## 2 Aim

This program aims to provide funding to support individuals and organisations to hold meaningful initiatives in the lead-up to, during, or in support of the Reconciliation Day Public Holiday on 1 June 2026 and Reconciliation Week held between 27 May and 3 June 2026.

Priority will be given to individuals and organisations that can demonstrate partnership and co-design with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities, for example through organisation structures (designated board membership, staff, and senior management positions), planning committees, and/or advisory mechanisms. This approach aligns with the priorities and principles of Closing the Gap, which emphasise self-determination, and locally-led, place-based solutions. The active involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people supports individuals and organisations to adopt culturally appropriate practices, and reflects a recognition of the importance of embedding their voices into service design and delivery.

## 3 Government objectives

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led organisations are encouraged to apply.

Consistent with the objectives of the grant program, funding for projects, activities or initiatives that contribute towards Closing the Gap priorities will be considered.

This is part of the ACT Government's commitment to Closing the Gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As outlined in the [ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement](#), the ACT Government and community partners are committed to self-determination as the guiding principle in the delivery of programs and services.

## ACT Health and Wellbeing

Projects and initiatives must demonstrate how they address any of the ACT Health and Wellbeing Framework outcomes.

For more information, visit the [ACT Wellbeing Framework website](#).

## 4 Eligibility requirements

### Who can apply?

- Individuals
- Organisations
- Partnerships, or collaborations.

Profit making groups, education institutions, government entities and registered political parties are not eligible to apply.

Eligible applicants can only apply once in the 2026 round.

Applicants must have no overdue acquittal obligations for any previous Health and Community Services Directorate grants. **All overdue acquittals must be completed prior to submitting an application.**

### Individual eligibility requirements

Individuals can apply if they:

- Reside in the ACT or surrounding regions. (A copy of an ACT or NSW Driver's License or Proof of Identity Card, or proof of residency stating their current address must be provided)
- Are over the age of 18 years old, or have a parent, carer or guardian submit the application on your behalf
- Have not received funding from another source to deliver or provide the same or similar project/program
- Have no overdue acquittal obligations for any previous Health and Community Services Directorate grant. **All overdue acquittals must be completed prior to submitting an application.**

- Have appropriate insurance (public liability, professional indemnity or other appropriate insurance) to undertake the activity or event. Evidence will be required prior to receiving the grant funding.

## Organisation eligibility requirements

Organisations can apply if they:

- Are a non-government, legally incorporated entity, or supported by an incorporated auspicing organisation
- Are a registered not-for-profit or a charitable organisation operating in the ACT
- Demonstrate that the program, project, or activity will be of benefit to the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and must demonstrate a strong connection to the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community
- Have no overdue acquittal obligations for any previous Health and Community Services Directorate grant. **All overdue acquittals must be completed prior to submitting an application**
- Have not received funding from another source to deliver or provide the same or similar project/program
- Have an appropriate insurance cover held by the organisation implementing a funded project. This may include Public Liability of no less than \$10 million, Personal Accident, Volunteer Cover and or Directors Professional Indemnity. Evidence of insurance may be required as a condition of the grant.

Unincorporated Community groups may be eligible to apply through an auspicing entity. For more information refer to 'Auspicing arrangements' section.

## Partnerships and consortiums

Joint-projects and collaborations are eligible for funding under this grant program. Projects that involve more than one group or organisation may apply as a partnership or consortium. In such instances the following is required:

- List the roles and responsibilities of each group or organisation
- Clarify who will take the lead, lodge the application, and submit the final acquittal
- Identify the financial contribution each is making to the project.

## Auspicing arrangements

If you are a community group or organisation that is not legally incorporated (unincorporated) then you may ask an incorporated association to auspice an application on your behalf.

An auspicing body is an organisation that accepts the legal responsibility including financial accountability for a project. If your organisation is not a legal entity, you will need to arrange for an organisation that has legal status to act as an auspicing body.

The auspicing organisation must provide a letter of support with the application stating they will:

- Be the applicant for this grant funding and if successful contract directly with the Health and Community Services Directorate for the receipt of grant funding, and comply with all grant funding contractual obligations, including the provision of financial acquittal documentation
- Be the entity that will accept the grant funding for the project and administer the funding in accordance with the Grant Guidelines and Letter of Offer
- Disburse grant funding to the auspiced party in accordance with the Grant Guidelines and Letter of Offer and not unreasonably withhold funding from the auspiced party for the implementation of the project.

### **Funding cannot be used for**

The following will not be funded:

- Projects that do not contribute to or meet the priority areas of this program
- Projects that are not delivered primarily in the ACT or do not benefit the ACT community
- Projects requiring ongoing funding to sustain the project or activity
- Projects or activities already funded by the ACT Government or Australia Government, or where alternative sources of funding are available
- Projects that are a duplication of, or in parallel with an existing service, program, project, or event
- Commercial and fundraising projects and events.
- General administration and operational costs such as salaries, memberships, subscription fees, communication and IT, stationery, rent, leasing, or utilities, machinery, vehicles, or large capital equipment of any kind
- Items not declared in the grant application and therefore unapproved
- Costs of projects or activities that have already taken place, or item already purchased
- Operational insurance costs specific to the project
- Activities for or by a political party
- Debt repayments of any kind
- Any travel or accommodation costs
- Prize money or gifts.
- Activities that contain content that may offend or bring into disrepute the applicant organisation, the Health and Community Services Directorate and/or the ACT Government

- Activities that do not comply with public safety requirements or meet relevant Australian Government legislative requirements
- Projects or activities which are deemed to be inappropriate or offensive.

## 5 Funding

### Available funding

The total funding available under this Program is \$50,000.

The maximum grant that can be applied for is \$5,000.

As there are no goods or services being exchanged, and the grant is intended as a contribution, GST is not applicable to grant payments.

The value is for one project or initiative only and is non-recurring.

Successful recipients will have until 30 June 2026 to expend the funding.

### Funding Categories

The 2026 ACT Reconciliation Day Grants aim to support community organised events, that are held by individuals or organisations, with a strong focus on Reconciliation, specifically:

- Promoting understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in the wider community
- Celebrating and raising the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in the wider community
- Promoting understanding of past policies and historical events and their impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Delivering opportunities for children, young people, and elders to be involved and participate in community events that promote Reconciliation
- Developing seminars, panel discussions, and/or other educational activities, on the importance of Reconciliation for all Australians.

## 6 Assessment of applications

When your application is received it will be checked against these grant guidelines to ensure eligibility for funding.

### Assessment process

Following the eligibility check, a Grant Assessment Team will assess your application. The Grant Assessment Team will be made up of a chairperson and 2 other assessors. Grant Assessment Team members will be appointed based on their knowledge of Reconciliation in the ACT and at least 2 of the members will be Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Successful applications may not receive the full amount applied for. The Grant Assessment Team will review and adjust the level of allocated funding as necessary.

Grant Assessment Team members will use the information provided in your application and information from any previous Health and Community Services Directorate grant rounds to assess the applications submitted. If you have been successful in other recent grant rounds, the Grant Assessment Team may take this into consideration during their assessment where there are a high number of applications received to ensure fairness across all applicants.

All decisions on whether to award a grant, or on the amount of any grant, are at the sole discretion of the Health and Community Services Directorate.

### **Assessment criteria for applications**

Due to the competitive process, all eligible applications will be assessed and prioritised by the Grant Assessment Team against the following criteria:

- **Capacity:** The proposal demonstrates that the individual or organisation has the capacity to manage the funding and deliver or complete the initiative, project, or activity.

*For Individuals applying, you may want to describe any skills, knowledge, experience, or connections that will help you to share your culture with the community.*

*For Organisations, you may want to describe if you have dedicated staff with the skills, experience, and time to manage the activity, any existing connections with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and plans for continued engagement with the community to delivery culturally appropriate services.*

- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation:** The proposal demonstrates how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are actively participating in this activity or event.

*Please ensure that you can demonstrate how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are involved in the design and delivery, as well as participating in your event or activity.*

- **Contribution:** The application demonstrates a contribution to the aims of Reconciliation in the ACT.
- **Budget:** The budget is realistic and clearly details all expenditure for the activity or event including demonstrating value for money.

A budget is an estimate of income and expenditure required to complete your chosen activity. You will need to provide a budget with your application. This needs to show the funding breakdown for different items.

In some cases, due to the high demand for grants, only partial funding can be offered. Therefore, you will need to consider if you can proceed with your project if only part-funding is available.

If you have applied for another grant for this same project, please ensure this is explained in your application.

**Late applications will not be accepted.**

### **Notification of outcome**

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application in writing via email.

The Health and Community Services Directorate expects to notify applicants of the outcome of their applications in mid-March 2026. Between the grant round closing, and receiving an outcome letter, applicants may not hear anything from the CSD Grants team.

Unfortunately, not all applications can be funded as there are usually more applications received than funds available. This does not necessarily mean that the application is not worthy. It is more likely that other applications were ranked higher in the assessment process.

If you would like feedback on your application, please see the 'Application Feedback' section.

## **7 Accepting a grant**

### **Grant Agreement**

Successful applicants will be required to enter into an Agreement. This will be via a Letter of Offer with the Health and Community Services Directorate for which grant funding will be provided. The Letter of Offer will include:

- How to accept an offer
- Detail the grant amount to be funded
- Detail the purpose or activity for which the grant is given
- The term of the funded activity for which the grant amount must be fully expended
- How to acquit the grant funds when the project has been completed.

The ACT Government does not carry any responsibility for the activities undertaken by grant recipients.

Funds must be spent only on items and activities listed in your application. The Letter of Offer may have conditions of what the funding can and cannot be spent on.

### **Changes to activity**

A grant is funded based on the details of your application only. If something changes due to unexpected circumstances, you must first obtain written approval from the Health and Community Services Directorate. Your request to change the activity will be reviewed by the Delegate and you will be advised in writing if the request is approved or declined. Failure to seek approval to change the purpose can result in non-conformance and may result in you having to return the full grant amount that was paid by the Health and Community Services Directorate.

## Acknowledging support

Grant Recipients must ensure the assistance provided by the ACT Government is appropriately acknowledged in any promotional or other materials. The ACT Government's Branding Guidelines and "Supported By" logo are accessible at:

<https://www.act.gov.au/act-government/communications/design-and-brand-guidelines>

## Grant and project promotion

The names, project descriptions and funding amounts of all successful applicants will be posted on the ACT Government Grants website following completion of the grants process. By accepting a grant, you agree to this and to the ACT Government Media team contacting you to discuss publishing a story on how the grant was used.

If you do not want your name published, or to be contacted by the ACT Government Media Team, please let the CSD Grants Team know when you accept your grant.

## 8 Acquittal and reporting requirements

All successful applicants must expend the grant funds they receive within the timeframes nominated in their Letter of Offer.

An acquittal is a signed declaration, submitted at the end of the activity, stating that funding was used for the agreed purpose. This includes providing copies of receipts as proof of expenditure.

### Acquittal process

The acquittal of the grant must be submitted through SmartyGrants at:

<http://dhcs.SmartyGrants.com.au/applicant>

Instructions will be provided to successful applicants in their Letter of Offer. You will need to login using the same identification details you used to submit the application. Please keep this in a safe place.

The funds must be expended in accordance with the activity/project outlined in the grant application and in the Letter of Offer. All receipts must be kept and submitted with the acquittal.

### Unspent funds

Any unspent funds from your grant must be returned to the Health and Community Services Directorate. Please email the CSD Grants team at [CSDgrants@act.gov.au](mailto:CSDgrants@act.gov.au) to advise of any unspent funds.

***Please note:*** To be eligible for funding in any future Health and Community Services Directorate grants rounds, applicants must meet all acquittal requirements.

## 9 Application submission

### Online Application Form

Now that you have read the Grant Guidelines, this section explains how to submit your application on SmartyGrants. All applications must be submitted via the online application form at:

<https://dhcs.smartygrants.com.au/2026RDG>

All applications must be submitted online. Hardcopy or email applications will not be accepted.

If you require assistance to complete your application please contact the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs team via email to [OATSIA.Grants@act.gov.au](mailto:OATSIA.Grants@act.gov.au)

Start early – the process of preparing a grant application depends on how well you have planned the activity for which you are applying. You can start this process long before you start and submit an application.

If you have never prepared a proposal or written a grant application, we suggest you take some time to understand the process and reach out for assistance if you need it. You will find lots of tips on the SmartyGrants website –

<http://help.smartygrants.com.au/display/help/Help+Guide+for+Applicants>

Start gathering your support materials. These might be quotes, or website details. You can never have enough evidence to support an application, so long as it is relevant to the activity to be funded.

### Create login

You will need to create a log in to begin your application and you may begin anywhere in the application form. Please make sure you save as you go.

### Navigating form

On the right-hand side of every screen, there is a box which links directly to every page of the application. Click on any page to jump directly to that page. You can also click 'next page' or 'previous page' on the top or bottom of each page to move forward or backward through the application.

### Saving draft

You can press 'save' at any point and log out. When you log back in, your draft application will be saved, and you can start where you left off.

### Submitting application

The submit button is on the final page. You will not be able to submit your application until all the questions are completed. Once your application has been submitted, you cannot make further changes to it.

## Supporting documentation

All applicants must provide supporting documentation at the time of submission.

If your application does not include all the required documentation, it may be deemed ineligible.

SmartyGrants provides an online help guide for applicants. This guide will explain the essential steps you need to take to complete and submit your form. The help guide is accessible at:

<http://help.smartygrants.com.au/display/help/Help+Guide+for+Applicants>

## Correct contact details

Please make sure that the contact details listed in your application form are correct. The Health and Community Services Directorate will use this information for all correspondence relating to your application.

## Completing application as a group/team

Several people can work on an application using the same login details provided that only 1 person is working on the application at any given time. Please ensure you save as you go.

## Save application

It is recommended that you keep a copy of your application for your records as well as your application ID number (e.g., 2026RDGxx). You can print a copy of your completed online application or save it as a PDF.

# 10 Application feedback

## Providing feedback

Applicants are encouraged to complete the feedback questions at the end of the application form. This feedback assists to improve grant programs, processes, and service delivery. You can also email feedback to the CSD Grants team at [CSDGrants@act.gov.au](mailto:CSDGrants@act.gov.au).

## Requesting feedback

The Health and Community Services Directorate supports your right to ask questions about the grant application process. If your application has not been successful, email the CSD Grants team at [CSDGrants@act.gov.au](mailto:CSDGrants@act.gov.au), quoting your application ID number and outlining your specific concerns. The Community Services Directorate will provide a response as soon as possible.

This information also assists to improve grant programs, processes, and service delivery.