



ACT
Government

2025-26 Seniors Grant Program

Grant Guidelines

Applications open: 12 noon Tuesday 4 November 2025
Applications close: 3 pm Tuesday 27 January 2026

Accessibility Information

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- If English is not your first language and you require the **translating and interpreting services** – please telephone **13 14 50**.
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2025-26 Seniors Grant program

1 Introduction

The Health and Community Services Directorate is pleased to announce the opening of the 2025-26 Seniors Grant Program (the Grants or the Grant Program).

This program provides funding support for projects that promote older Canberrans to engage, stay connected and actively participate as valued members of the ACT community.

2 Aim

This Grant Program aims to support innovative projects which promote older Canberrans as valued members of the local community and enable their active participation in community life. The Grant Program has a particular emphasis on supporting projects which address the abuse and mistreatment of older people, enhanced social inclusion, or the diverse the needs of older members of the community, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders and seniors from multicultural backgrounds.

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 which contribute towards closing the gap on disadvantage between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Canberrans 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?

- Organisations
- Partnerships, or consortiums.

Individuals, profit making groups, government entities and registered political parties are not eligible to apply.

Eligible organisations, partnerships or collaborations can only apply once in the 2025-26 round.

Organisation eligibility requirements

Organisations can apply if they:

- Operate in the ACT
- Are a legally incorporated entity or supported by an incorporated auspicing organisation
- Are a registered not-for-profit or a charitable organisation
- 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

Have you considered undertaking the project in collaboration with another organisation?

Projects which involve more than 1 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 which is not legally incorporated (unincorporated) then you may ask an incorporated organisation to auspice an application on your behalf.

An auspicing body is an organisation which 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 which 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.

Project eligibility

Eligible projects must:

- Provide a service/program which will be located primarily in the ACT and primarily for the benefit of ACT residents
- Provide how the program will primarily benefit ACT residents
- Include all supporting documentation needed for the application.

Funding cannot be used for

The following will not be funded:

- Projects which do not contribute to or meet the aims and priorities of the Grant Program
- Projects which are not delivered primarily within the ACT or benefits the ACT community
- Projects requiring ongoing funding to sustain the project or activity
- Projects or activities already funded by the ACT Government or Australian Government, or where alternative sources of funding are available
- Projects which 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, 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 which 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 which contain content which may offend or bring into disrepute the applicant organisation, the Health and Community Services Directorate and/or the ACT Government
- Activities which do not comply with public safety requirements or meet relevant legislative requirements
- Projects which are deemed to be inappropriate or offensive.

5 Funding

Available funding

The total funding available under this program is \$80,000.

The maximum grant that can be applied for is \$10,000.

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 and or initiative only and is non-recurring.

Successful recipients will have 12 months from the date of the Letter of Offer to expend the funding.

6 Priority areas for funding

The 2025-26 Seniors Grant Program has 3 priority areas for projects and initiatives:

- **Respect and inclusion of older Canberrans**
- **Awareness of abuse and mistreatment of older people and supported decision making**
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seniors**

Respect and inclusion of older Canberrans

This priority targets the wellbeing and participation of older Canberrans. Types of projects include:

- Supporting older Canberrans to be able to live well, with dignity, safety, and purpose. This includes activities to better understand and/or address factors that contribute to increasing the risk of vulnerability or marginalisation of older members of our community. This could

include but is not limited to projects which focus on issues such as homelessness, financial pressures, and/or social isolation.

- Projects, activities, or initiatives which assist older Canberrans to participate in all aspects of community life, be it through work, volunteering, art, sport, and/or skills development. This includes projects that enhance whole of community engagement with older members of our community.
- Projects which encourage older Canberrans to engage in activities in local outdoor community spaces, which support active, healthy living and reduce social isolation.

Awareness of abuse and mistreatment of older people and supported decision making

Projects, activities, or initiatives which contribute towards raising awareness and the prevention of abuse and mistreatment of older people within the ACT community. This includes, but is not limited to projects which:

- Focus on the diverse experiences of abuse and mistreatment, including seniors from multicultural backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seniors
- Provide education and promotion of supported decision making over substitute decision making for older people
- Education, information, and awareness raising in relation to end of life planning.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seniors

Projects, activities, or initiatives which relate to the priorities listed in the guidelines above which focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

7 Assessment of applications

Assessment process

Following the eligibility check, the Grant Assessment Team will assess your application. The Grant Assessment Team will be made up of a chairperson and 2 other assessors, which may include a representative from the Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing. Grant Assessment Team members will be appointed based on their knowledge of the issues facing older Canberrans.

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 grants 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:

- **Priorities:** The proposal aligns with the funding aims and priorities.
- **Capacity:** The proposal demonstrated the applicant has the capacity to deliver the initiative and manage the funding.
- **Evidence of need:** The need for the project in the target community is demonstrated. Evidence of target group needs and priorities is included. Consultation with the target community has been undertaken and documented in the submission.
- **Project sustainability:** The proposal outlines how the project will maintain outcomes beyond the funding period.
- **Budget:** The budget is realistic and clearly details all expenditure and any additional income for the project and demonstrates value for money.

A budget is an estimate of income and expenditure required to complete your project. 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 applications in writing via email.

The Health and Community Services Directorate expects to notify applicants of the outcome of their applications in April 2026. Please ensure that this timeframe is taken into consideration when planning your project. 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 the project or application is not worthy. It is more likely that other project applications were ranked higher in the assessment process.

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

8 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 project

Your 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 project 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:

[Design and Brand Guidelines - ACT Government](#)

Grant and project promotion

The names, project descriptions and funding amounts of all successful applications will be posted on the [ACT Government Grants website](#). 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.

9 Acquittal and reporting requirements

All successful applicants must expend the funds within the timeframes nominated in the Letter of Offer.

An acquittal is a signed declaration, submitted at the end of the activity, stating 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, and all receipts must be retained and submitted with the acquittal.

Unspent funds

Any unspent funds from your grant must be returned to Health and Community Services Directorate. Please email the CSD Grants team at 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.*

10 Application submission

Online Application Form

Now 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/2526SG>

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 Seniors and Veterans on 6205 2598 or email OSV@act.gov.au.

Create log in

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., 2526SGxx). You can print a copy of your completed online application or save it as a PDF.

11 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.

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, quoting your application ID number and outlining your specific concerns. The Health and Community Services Directorate will provide a response as soon as possible.

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