Try, Test and Learn Fund
Tranche 2 Project
Guidelines

Opening date:	**22 November 2017**
Closing date and time:	**2.00 PM AEST** on **28 September 2018**
Commonwealth policy entity:	**Department of Social Services**
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, please contact:
	Phone: 1800 020 283
	Email: support@communitygrants.gov.au
Date guidelines released:	**22 November 2017**
Type of grant opportunity:	**Open competitive**

Contents

1. Try, Test and Learn Fund Tranche 2 Processes

1.1 About the Tranche 2 processes

Key terms in this flowchart (and throughout these Grant Opportunity Guidelines) are defined in the glossary (section 13).

The Try, Test and Learn Fund is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives

The Tranche 2 grant opportunity is part of the Try, Test and Learn Fund grant program, which contributes to the Department of Social Services Outcome 1: Social Security. The Department of Social Services works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines*.

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The grant opportunity opens

We publish the grant guidelines and advertise on the GrantConnect and Community Grants Hub websites.

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You complete and submit a grant application

You must read these grant guidelines before you submit your application. These guidelines can be found on GrantConnect, the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system. **Note:** Any addenda for this grant opportunity will be published on GrantConnect, and by registering on the GrantConnect website you will be automatically notified of any changes.

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We assess grant applications in batches

We will assess one or more grant applications in batches at regular intervals. We will assess the applications against eligibility criteria and notify you if you are not eligible. If eligible, we will then assess your application against the assessment criteria drawing on policy and research expertise inside and outside of Government, including an overall consideration of value for money and compare it to other applications.

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We make grant recommendations

After assessing each batch of one or more applications, we provide advice to the Minister for Social Services (the decision maker) on the merits of each application in that batch.

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Grant decisions are made
The Minister decides which grant applications in each batch are successful.

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We notify you of the outcome
We advise you of the outcome of your grant application.

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We enter into a grant agreement
We will enter into a grant agreement with successful applicants. The type of grant agreement will be based on the nature of the grant and will be proportional to the risks involved.

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Delivery of grant
You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. We manage the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making payments.

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Evaluation of the program and grant activities
We evaluate the specific grant activities for each grant awarded as well as the Try, Test and Learn Fund program as a whole. We base this on information that you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

1.2 Role of the Community Grants Hub

This grant opportunity will be managed by the Community Grants Hub (the Hub) on behalf of the Department of Social Services, under a Whole of Australian Government initiative to streamline the grants processes across agencies.

1.3 About the grant program

These guidelines contain information about the open competitive grant process for Tranche 2 of the Try, Test and Learn Fund grant program.[1] The background and objectives of the Fund, including the Australian Priority Investment Approach to Welfare, are set out in the next section.

Tranche 2 of the Try, Test and Learn Fund will be undertaken according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017* (CGRGs).

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[1] See glossary.

This document sets out:

- the background and goals of the Try, Test and Learn Fund

- how the Try, Test and Learn Fund works

- the selection criteria and process for applying for grants through the Tranche 2 open competitive grant process

- how grant applications will be evaluated

- responsibilities and expectations in relation to this grant opportunity.

You must read this document before completing an application to Tranche 2.

1.4 About the grant opportunity

These grant guidelines govern the Tranche 2 grant opportunity[2] for the Try, Test and Learn Fund. This grant opportunity will support small-scale trials of new or innovative approaches to support people at risk of long-term welfare dependence, including four identified priority groups. This grant opportunity will be an open competitive grant process to select and fund applications to deliver such small-scale trials, which means trials that will run for six months to two years with a budget less than $5 million. Multiple grants will be available and applicants can submit more than one application.

1.4.1 Background to the grant opportunity

The Australian Priority Investment Approach to Welfare was a recommendation of the 2015 review of Australia's welfare system, *A New System for Better Employment and Social Outcomes*, led by Patrick McClure. It was established in 2015 by the Australian Department of Social Services and is underpinned by annual actuarial valuations of welfare payment data. The actuarial valuations estimate the future lifetime cost of welfare payments to the Australian population and groups within it.

The objectives of the Priority Investment Approach are to improve lifetime wellbeing by:

- increasing the capacity of individuals to participate in social and economic life and to live independently of welfare

- reducing the risk of welfare dependence

- reducing long-term social security costs in the interests of maintaining a sustainable support system for vulnerable Australians.

The Try, Test and Learn Fund was announced in the 2016-17 Federal Budget as an initial response to the Australian Priority Investment Approach to Welfare under Outcome 1.10 Working Age Payments. It will develop and fund small-scale trials of new or innovative policy responses that are aimed at improving workforce participation or capacity to work for groups at risk of long-term welfare dependence.

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[2] See glossary.

The objective of the Try, Test and Learn Fund is to generate new insights and empirical evidence into 'what works' to reduce long-term welfare dependence.

Projects will be selected based, in part, on the value of the evidence that they will generate. Projects will be robustly evaluated to produce high-quality policy evidence about the effectiveness of interventions, for whom, and under what circumstances. In this way, the Fund will allow the Government to identify approaches that work, and use this evidence to transform our investment in existing programs or make the case for new investments.

The Try, Test and Learn Fund takes an open and collaborative approach to policy development. This approach is focussed on seeking new ideas from and collaborating with a diverse range of stakeholders, including the community sector, business, academia and the general public, in order to develop new ways of tackling complex social challenges.
In Tranche 2 of the Fund, grants will include funding to undertake co-development activities to make small adjustments to refine and optimise project design. These co-development activities will be tailored to the needs of each project and may involve collaboration with end users, the Commonwealth and other stakeholders.

1.4.2 Groups to be supported by Tranche 2

Tranche 2 of the Try, Test and Learn Fund will support groups at risk of long-term welfare dependence, including the four priority groups identified below, to improve their workforce participation or capacity to work. Applications to support the priority groups will not be given a higher weighting in the assessment process.

The Department identified the Tranche 2 priority groups using Priority Investment Approach data and policy considerations. The priority groups are:

- Newstart Allowance recipients aged 50 and over (with a focus on those who have been out of the workforce for longer than 12 months)

- Migrants and refugees aged 16-64 and receiving income support

- Carers aged 16-64 and receiving Carer Payment

- At-risk young people aged 16-21 and receiving income support.

You will be able to describe the group that you propose to support as part of your application. It may be one of the priority groups, a subset of one of the priority groups (e.g. based on a particular age range, location, or other characteristics), or another group that you identify. You may identify other groups at risk of long-term welfare dependence through your experience in working with vulnerable people, analysis of Priority Investment Approach data, or other research. As part of the Fund's emphasis on gathering useful policy evidence, your application will need to justify the needs of the group that you propose to support.

To support you to develop applications and ideas for the Fund, the Department will provide some online resources advertised on the GrantConnect and Community Grants Hub websites. The Department may also conduct some workshops related to Tranche 2.
These events would be advertised, and recordings shared, through the same websites.

1.5 Grant opportunity objectives and outcomes

The objective of this grant opportunity[3] is to gather evidence to inform future Government policy through small-scale trials of projects to support people at risk of long-term welfare dependence, including the four priority groups, to improve their workforce participation or capacity to work. Small scale means that the trials would generally run for six months up to two years with a budget less than $5 million.

The outcomes of the grant opportunity are to:

- gather policy evidence on 'what works' to support people at risk of long-term welfare dependence to improve their workforce participation or capacity to work

- improve capacity to work (e.g. through training or skills development) and / or workforce participation for people involved in the trials

- build capacity and collaboration between Government and other stakeholders.

Projects financed through this grant opportunity will be evaluated against a number of outcomes that will be specific to the nature of the projects and specified in the grant agreements. For example, these outcomes may include improved job readiness; increased access to training and retention in training or course completion; increased pursuit of employment where appropriate to circumstances; or increased employment including hours worked and duration of employment.

2. Grant amount

The Australian Government has announced a total of $79.6 million to finance projects over the four years of the Try, Test and Learn Fund. There will be around $50 million available to support projects over the course of Tranche 2 of the Fund.

The Department intends to distribute funding across different groups at risk of long-term welfare dependence, including the four priority groups, and across the five assessment batches in January, March, May, July and September 2018. As discussed in sections 1.4.2 and 6, higher weighting will not be given to applications supporting the priority groups. The distribution of funding will also depend on the volume and quality of applications received for this grant opportunity.

Individual grant amounts will be guided by project design and complexity. The approximate budget range for grants under this grant opportunity will be between $0.5 million and $5 million. The length of project trials will be up to two years depending on the objective and outcomes of each project. The Try, Test and Learn Fund is currently expected to run until the end of June 2020. As such, the length of grants will depend on how long before June 2020 they are expected to commence. Grants issued later in Tranche 2 will have a shorter maximum length than those granted earlier.

Note that there may be other grant opportunities for the Try, Test and Learn Fund which would reduce the total funding available through this grant opportunity. Any such grant opportunities will be advertised on the GrantConnect and the Community Grants Hub websites and noted in an addendum to these grant guidelines.

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[3] See glossary.

3. Grant eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if it does not satisfy all of the eligibility criteria.

3.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible to apply for a grant through this grant opportunity, you must:

- be one of the following entity types:

    o   Company

    o   Indigenous Corporation

    o   Incorporated Association

    o   Co-operative

    o   Incorporated Trustee on behalf of a Trust (signed Trust Deeds must be provided)

    o   Local Government

    o   Partnership (signed Partnership Agreement must be provided)

    o   Sole Trader

    o   Statutory Entity

- Person have an Australian Business Number (ABN) or be willing to obtain one prior to execution of the Grant Agreement,

- be registered for the purposes of GST or be willing to register prior to execution of the Grant Agreement,

- be a permanent resident of Australia, and

- have an account with an Australian financial institution.

3.2 Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply for a grant through this grant opportunity if you are:

- a state or territory government,

- an unincorporated association, or

- an overseas resident.

Note that non-government organisations may apply as the lead members of consortia including state and territory governments. State and territory governments are encouraged to consider partnerships with non-government organisations, however are not eligible to apply for this grant opportunity as solo or lead applicants.

4. Eligible grant activities

4.1 What can the grant money be used for?

The grant can be used for grant activities agreed in the grant agreement.[4] Tranche 2 grants will provide funding for co-development, that is brief stakeholder consultation to refine project design, as well as the delivery of project trials. These stages will entail:

- **Co-development.** A brief consultative process to refine and optimise project design. The grantee[5] will conduct collaborative activities with other stakeholders such as end users to make small adjustments to the project design to make the trial as efficient and effective as possible.

  The activities conducted will vary according to the nature and complexity of each project. They may be as simple as short workshops with end users for well-developed projects, or may entail several meetings with others such as community organisations, academics and government agencies.

- **Delivery.** The provision of services and supports to people at risk of long-term welfare dependence as part of a small-scale trial. Small scale means that the trials would generally run for six months up to two years with a budget less than $5 million. The services and supports offered may include, but are not limited to:

  - structured programs (i.e. training, counselling and / or advocacy)

  - apps or other technology solutions

  - employer-side programs to develop job opportunities

  - use of behavioural insights to improve existing programs

  - conditionality or mutual obligation requirements (i.e. changes to the obligations that people need to meet to receive payments or Government services)

  - other new or innovative approaches.

The grant can be used for the following grant activities[6] in support of co-development or delivery, as negotiated under the grant agreement:

- staff salaries and on-costs which can be directly attributed to the provision of the grant activity in the identified service area or areas as per the grant agreement

- employee training for paid and unpaid staff including Committee and Board members that is relevant, appropriate and in line with the grant activity

- operating and administration expenses **directly related** to the project as per the grant agreement, such as:

  - telephones

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[4] See glossary.
[5] See glossary.
[6] See glossary.

- o rent and outgoings

- o computer / IT / website / software

- o insurance

- o utilities

- o postage

- o stationery and printing

- o accounting and auditing

- o domestic travel / accommodation costs

- o assets as defined in the terms and conditions of the grant agreement that can be reasonably attributed to meeting agreement deliverables

- o payment to subcontractors to perform eligible grant activities.

4.2 What can the grant money not be used for?

The grant cannot be used for the following grant activities:

- purchase of land

- capital expenditure[7]

- subsidy of general ongoing administration costs such as rent, electricity and phone **not directly related** to the project being delivered as part of the grant agreement

- costs to attend and travel to conferences

- overseas travel

- the covering of retrospective costs, that is costs incurred prior to the commencement of the grant agreement

- costs of business as usual activities that are not part of the project being delivered as part of the grant agreement.[8]

Please note the grant cannot be used for the costs incurred in the preparation of your grant application or related documentation.

5. The grant selection process

The Department, in partnership with the Hub, will consider compliant and eligible applications through an open competitive grant selection process.[9]

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[7] See glossary.
[8] See section 4.1. Costs such as rent and utilities may be apportioned to the grant activity as agreed in the grant agreement.
[9] See glossary.

The Hub will assess your application against eligibility criteria (set out in section 3 and 4) and assessment criteria (set out in section 6).[10]

The Hub intends to divide the assessment of applications into five batches. Each batch will contain applications that have been submitted for the grant opportunity over a two-month period. For example, the first batch will contain all applications submitted to the grant opportunity between the opening date of the application period and **31 January 2018**. The second batch will contain all applications submitted to the grant opportunity over the next two months, ending **30 March 2018**, and so on. The table below identifies the cut-off dates for all five batches.

Batch	Applications included in batch
1	All applications submitted to the grant opportunity by **31 January 2018**.
2	All applications submitted to the grant opportunity by **30 March 2018**.
3	All applications submitted to the grant opportunity by **31 May 2018**.
4	All applications submitted to the grant opportunity by **31 July 2018**.
5	All applications submitted to the grant opportunity by **2:00 PM AEST** on **28 September 2018**.

Please note that the cut-off date for each batch only affects the time at which the Hub will assess your application. It does not affect the time at which you must submit your application. The only exception to this rule is the cut-off date for Batch 5, which is the closing date and time of the overall application period for Tranche 2. Other than this exception, you can submit an application at any time during the application period and the Hub will assess it in one of the five batches identified above.

Following the assessment of a batch, the Hub will collate assessment information and prepare an assessment report for the Department.

The Department will then convene a panel of experts (expert panel) to review the information and provide recommendations to the decision maker,[11] the Minister for Social Services. An expert panel will consist of representatives from the Department and may also include and / or consult representatives from third parties with relevant expertise.

Expert panels will be convened when the Hub has completed each batch of assessments. The first expert panel will be convened after the Hub has assessed the January batch of applications, and the second after the Hub has assessed the March applications and so on. The panel will recommend to the Minister which applications should be funded. Successful applicants will be notified and offered grant agreements.

The Panel may shortlist other applications deemed suitable to fund. Shortlisted applications may be reconsidered at a later meeting of the expert panel.

The Department reserves the right to recommend to the Minister for Social Services any suitable applications from any batch at any time. This will allow the Department to respond flexibly to the volume and type of applications received over time as well as emerging policy priorities and other influences.

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[10] See glossary.
[11] See glossary.

See section 9 for information on how applicants will be notified about the status of their applications, particularly with regard to whether their applications may be considered at a later date.

As part of an expert panel's review of assessments, it will consider each project's innovation and value for money. It may also consider the distribution of grants across geographic locations and across different groups at risk of long-term welfare dependence. Applications to support priority groups will not be given a higher weighting.

To determine the extent to which a project will achieve value for money, an expert panel will consider many factors, including:

- The application's merit against the assessment criteria.[12]

- The application's merit relative to other applications assessed to date.

- The extent to which the application meets the requirements of the grant and achieves the grant's objective(s).

- The application's chosen target group and/or service area.

- The amount of funding that the application would require relative to the amount of funding required by other applications.

- The intended quality and quantity of service provision, including the efficiency and effectiveness of the grant activity.[13]

- The extent to which the applicant's grant activity is innovative.

Similarly, to determine the extent to which a project is innovative, an expert panel will consider many factors, including whether and to what extent the project would:

- fill a gap in existing service offerings to improve workforce participation or capacity to work for participants

- trial new approaches, processes or technologies and / or engage end users in a new way or in new locations

- provide new and useful policy evidence for the Government about 'what works' to support people at risk of long-term welfare dependence.

6. The assessment criteria

As part of your application, you will need to respond to all of the assessment criteria identified below. The Hub will assess your application based on your responses to each criterion. Please note that the application form imposes word limits on your responses to the assessment criteria.

Applicants must address the five equally weighted assessment criteria set out below.
You will be able to identify the group that your project will support in your application.
Note that applications to support the priority groups will not be given a higher weighting.

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[12] See glossary.
[13] See glossary.

Criterion 1: Demonstrate the target group's need for your project.

Your response should:

- provide evidence that the people targeted by your project are at risk of long-term welfare dependence (e.g. evidence may include Priority Investment Approach data, research, government reports, empirical evidence, etc.);

- provide evidence of the need for your project among those it would support (e.g. evidence may include Priority Investment Approach data, research, government reports, empirical evidence, etc.); and

- outline how your project addresses an existing service gap and does not duplicate existing services or supports that are available to your targeted group.

Criterion 2: Explain how your project will address the target group's needs.

Your response should:

- outline the services that your project will offer to participants;

- outline how your project will improve individuals' workforce participation or capacity to work; and

- outline how your project will address barriers to employment that affect the target group.

Criterion 3: Explain how the implementation of your project will achieve the grant objectives.

Your response should:

- explain how your project will generate valuable new insights and empirical evidence that could improve Government policy aimed at increasing workforce participation or capacity to work for groups at risk of long-term welfare dependence;

- explain how your project is a new or innovative approach to supporting a group at risk of long-term welfare dependence; and

- explain how your project will be practical to implement and evaluate as a trial within the required timeframe.

Criterion 4: Explain how your project will achieve value for money for the Commonwealth.

Your response should:

- explain how your requested amount of grant funding is proportional to the scale, benefits and number of participants supported by your project; and

- explain how your project will use grant funding efficiently and effectively (i.e. economically).

Criterion 5: Demonstrate your organisation's capability to successfully deliver the project and achieve the grant objectives, including its ability to deliver on time.

Your response should:

- outline key staff that will manage and deliver the project, including: the amount of time they will devote; their qualifications; their skills; and their experience, including relevant experience working with the identified participants in the proposed location; and

- demonstrate your organisation's experience in successfully delivering projects, and explain how this experience will support your organisation to deliver its project and achieve the grant objectives, including generating measurable outcomes in two years or less.

7. The grant application process

7.1 Overview of application process

The Australian Government has announced a total of $79.6 million to finance projects over the four years of the Try, Test and Learn Fund. There will be around $50 million available to support projects over the course of Tranche 2 of the Fund.

You must read these grant guidelines the application form, and the grant agreement[14] terms and conditions before you submit an application.

You are responsible for ensuring that your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information will exclude your application from further consideration.

You must address all of the assessment criteria[15] to be eligible for a grant. Please complete each section of the application form and make sure that you provide the information that we have requested.

Please keep a copy of your application and any supporting papers.

7.2 Application process timing

The application period for this grant opportunity will open on 22 November 2017 and close on **28 September 2018**. Applicants must submit their applications by the final closing date and time. As outlined in section 5, the Hub will assess applications in batches.

The expected commencement date for the granting activities will be on execution of the grant agreement. The expected completion date will be subject to individual grant agreements, but will be no later than 30 June 2020. You must spend the grant funding by the completion date identified in your grant agreement.[16]

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[14] See glossary.
[15] See glossary.
[16] See glossary.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Application period	22 November 2017 to **2:00 PM AEST** on **28 September 2018**
Assessment of applications	Five weeks, however timing will depend on the volume and complexity of applications, and the capacity of the Community Grants Hub and the expert panel. Note that the expert panel may consider any applications assessed and shortlisted by the Community Grants Hub.
Approval of outcomes of selection process	Timing will depend on the volume and complexity of applications recommended to the Minister for Social Services. Note that the Department may recommend any suitable applications from any batch at any time.
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	It is expected agreements will be awarded two months after the decision by the Delegate.
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	Ongoing as funding decisions are made
Commencement date	On execution of the grant agreement
Completion date	Subject to individual grant agreements

7.2.1 Late applications

This late application policy applies only to applications received after the final closing date of Tranche 2 (i.e. 2:00pm AEST on 28 September 2018).

If an application is late or an applicant requests the Community Grants Hub to approve a lodgement after the closing date, the Hub may determine that there were exceptional circumstances beyond the applicant's control resulting in an inability to meet the stipulated deadline. Examples of exceptional circumstances include, but may not be limited to:

- Community Grants Hub infrastructure failures

- natural disasters

- power outages affecting the ability of the applicant to submit their application by the deadline

- death or disability of key personnel.

Information on the Hub's late application policy is available on the Community Grants Hub website.

7.3 Completing the grant application

You must submit your grant application using the application form for the relevant grant opportunity, which is available on the GrantConnect and Community Grants Hub websites. The application form includes help information.

This is an online application form that you must submit electronically. If you have any technical difficulties please contact 1800 020 283 or email support@communitygrants.gov.au.

The Community Grants Hub will not provide application forms or accept applications for the Tranche 2 grant opportunity by fax or mail.

You must make sure that your application is complete and accurate and submitted in accordance with these grant guidelines.

You cannot change your application after submitting it.

If you submit an application that is intended to replace a previous application submitted to the Tranche 2 grant opportunity (including an application that was shortlisted), please notify the Community Grants Hub by calling 1800 020 283 or emailing support@communitygrants.gov.au. Please be ready to quote your application's Submission Reference Numbers upon request.

7.4 Attachments to the application

The following documents must be included with your application:

- project plan (a template is provided for use)

- most recent financial statements for two financial years (if available)

- statement on the provided template of whether you would like special conditions on intellectual property in the template grant agreement (see template for details).

Your supporting documentation should be attached to the application form. There will be instructions in the application form to help you. Only attach the documents that you have been asked to include.

Note that there is a 2MB file size limit for each attachment.

7.5 Applications from consortia

Some organisations may apply as a consortium to deliver grant activities. A consortium is two or more entities that are working together to combine their capabilities to develop and deliver a grant activity.[17]

If you are submitting a grant application on behalf of a consortium, a member organisation or a newly created organisation must be appointed as the 'lead organisation'. The lead organisation must meet the eligibility criteria at section 3.1. Only the lead organisation will enter into a grant agreement[18] with the Commonwealth and will be responsible for the grant.

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[17] See glossary.
[18] See glossary.

The lead organisation must complete the application form and identify all other members of the proposed consortium in the application.

7.6 Questions during the application process

To submit a question please call the Community Grants Hub on 1800 020 283 or email support@communitygrants.gov.au. The Community Grants Hub will respond to emailed questions within five working days. Answers to questions will be posted on GrantConnect and the Community Grants Hub websites.

7.7 Further grant opportunities

Tranche 2 will close to applications at **2:00 PM AEST on Friday 28 September 2018**. At this time, it is not expected that the Try, Test and Learn Fund will open for further grants after September 2018.

Note that there may be other grant opportunities for the Try, Test and Learn Fund prior to September 2018 which would be advertised on the GrantConnect and the Community Grants Hub websites and noted in an addendum to these grant guidelines.

8. Assessment of grant opportunities

8.1 Who will assess applications?

Applications to the Tranche 2 grant opportunity will be assessed by the Department of Social Services. They will be assessed by staff from the Community Grants Hub, departmental policy and delivery staff.

The assessment team will comprise staff from the Community Grants Hub. The assessment team will undertake training to ensure consistent assessment of all applications.

If the selection process identifies unintentional errors in your application, you may be contacted by the assessment team to correct or explain the information.

Following assessment, an expert panel will review assessed applications to inform final recommendations for funding. Expert panels will be convened when the Hub has completed each batch of assessments. The first expert panel will be convened after the Hub has assessed the January batch of applications, and the second after the Hub has assessed the March applications and so on. The panel will recommend to the Delegate which applications should be funded. Successful applicants will be notified and offered grant agreements. The Panel may shortlist other applications deemed suitable to fund. Shortlisted applications may be reconsidered at a later meeting of the expert panel.

The expert panel may seek input and advice from external parties including the Inter-Departmental Committee,[19] other representatives of Commonwealth agencies, and other policy experts, such as academics or peak bodies.

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[19] See glossary.

The advice from these external representatives will be considered as part of the expert panel's recommendations to the decision maker.[20]

The expert panel may seek information about you or your application. They may do this from within the Commonwealth, even if the sources are not nominated by you as referees.
The expert panel may also consider information about you or your application that is available through the normal course of business.

8.2 Who will approve grants?

The Department's expert panel will make recommendations to the decision maker[21] who is the Minister for Social Services. The Department reserves the right to recommend to the Minister for Social Services any suitable applications from any batch at any time.
The Minister will make the final decision to approve a grant.

The Minister's decision is final in all matters, including:

- approval of the grant

- the grant funding amount to be awarded

- the terms and conditions of the grant.

The Minister must not approve funding if he or she reasonably considers that the program funding available across financial years will not accommodate the funding offer, and / or that the application does not represent value for money.

9. Notification of application outcomes

You will be advised of the outcomes of your application in writing. If you are successful, you will also be advised about any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will notify you in writing. If your application was unsuitable, you will be notified that it will not be considered further during Tranche 2. If your application was suitable but unsuccessful in receiving funding in a particular batch (i.e. shortlisted), we will notify you that we may consider your application at a later point.

Applicants who were unsuccessful in applying for grants may reapply later in the Tranche 2 application period. Applicants who have been advised that their application was suitable but has not received funding may contact the Department to withdraw their application from further consideration. See section 7.6 for contact details.

9.1 Feedback

A Feedback Summary will be provided to offer general feedback related to the grant process and will include the main strengths and areas of improvement for the applications received in this process. Please note that individual feedback will not be provided.

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[20] See glossary.
[21] See glossary.

The Feedback Summary will be published on the GrantConnect and Community Grants Hub websites when the grant process has been completed for each regular assessment batch.

Applicants who were unsuccessful in applying for grants may reapply later in the Tranche 2 application period. Even if applicants address the issues raised by the Feedback Summaries released over the course of Tranche 2, there is no guarantee that they will receive funding in the next assessment batch.

10. Successful grant applications

10.1   The grant agreement

If you are successful, you must enter into a legally binding agreement with the Commonwealth represented by the Department of Social Services. Standard terms and conditions for the grant agreement will apply and cannot be changed. A schedule may be used to outline the specific grant requirements. Any additional conditions attached to the grant will be identified in the grant offer or during the grant agreement negotiations.[22]

You will be required to:

- deliver the project and meet the performance reporting and financial acquittal requirements outlined in your grant agreement.

The Department of Social Services will negotiate agreements with the successful applicants. If there are unreasonable delays in finalising a grant agreement then the grant offer may be withdrawn and the grant may be awarded to a different applicant.

Where a grantee fails to meet the obligations of the grant agreement, the Department of Social Services may seek to terminate the relevant agreement.[23] You should not make financial commitments until a grant agreement has been executed by the Commonwealth.

10.2   How the grant will be paid

The grant agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount to be paid.

We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra eligible expenditure, you must pay it yourself.

Grant funding will be paid:

- according to agreed milestones and performance indicators defined in the grant agreement and activity work plan.

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[22] See glossary.
[23] See glossary.

We recognise that unexpected events may affect the progress of a grant activity.[24] In these circumstances, you can request an activity variation, including:

- changing an activity's milestones

- extending the timeframe for completing an activity but within the time period of the Try, Test and Learn Fund program.

The program does not allow for:

- an increase to the agreed amount of grant funds.

If you want to propose changes to the grant agreement, you must put them in writing before the grant agreement completion date. Contact your Grant Agreement Manager for further information. We will not consider changes after the grant agreement completion date.[25]

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on factors such as:

- how it affects the project outcome

- consistency with the program policy objective and any relevant policies of the Department of Social Services

- changes to the timing of grant payments

- availability of program funds.

11. Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website 21 calendar days after the date of effect[26] as required by Section 5.3 of the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017*.

12. Delivery of grant activities

12.1 Your responsibilities

If successful, you must carry out the grant activities in accordance with these grant guidelines and the grant agreement and activity work plan, which includes standard terms and conditions and any supplementary conditions. The grant agreement will outline specific grant requirements. It will include agreed responsibilities for co-development as well as the delivery of a small-scale trial of your proposed project.

You must submit reports in line with the timeframes in the grant agreement. We will provide sample templates for these reports in the grant agreement. We will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed project milestones

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[24] See glossary.
[25] See glossary.
[26] See glossary.

- contributions of participants directly related to the project

- eligible expenditure of grant funds.

You will also be responsible for:

- ensuring that your application is accurate and complete

- ensuring that the terms and conditions of the grant agreement are met and that the grant activity is managed in an efficient and effective manner

- meeting milestones and other timeframes specified in the grant agreement

- complying with record keeping, reporting and acquittal requirements in accordance with the grant agreement

- participating in grant program evaluation as necessary for the period specified in the grant agreement

- ensuring that the grant activity outputs and outcomes are in accordance with the grant agreement.

12.2 The Department's responsibilities

The Department of Social Services will:

- meet the terms and conditions set out in the grant agreement

- provide timely administration of the grant

- evaluate the grantee's performance.[27]

We will contribute to the co-development process and facilitate contributions from other Commonwealth departments if agreed under the terms of the grant agreement.

We will monitor the progress of your project by assessing reports that you submit and other agreed performance data and may conduct site visits to confirm details of your reports if necessary. Occasionally we may need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

12.3 Grant payments and GST

Payments will be made as set out in the grant agreement.

Before any payments are made, you must provide:

- a tax invoice for the amount of the payment (the Australian Government's default invoice process is Recipient Created Tax Invoices)

- evidence that you have achieved the associated milestone

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[27] See glossary.

- any other conditions of payment (e.g. evidence of purchase of equipment, satisfactory progress report, approvals, and any other documentation).

If you receive a grant, you should consider speaking to a tax advisor about the effect of receiving a grant before you enter into a grant agreement. You can also visit the <u>Australian Taxation office</u> website for more information.

12.4 Reporting

Grant recipients must have systems in place to allow them to meet their data collection and reporting obligations outlined in their grant agreement.

Performance information (e.g. client characteristics and service delivery information) will be required to be collected by service providers at the client level and entered directly into the Department's client data capture system, its predecessor, or via an alternative mechanism approved by the Department. Where the collection of client level data is not appropriate, for instance because the activity involves a large group, aggregate reporting will be permitted.

Information must be provided in accordance with the Data Exchange Protocols available on the <u>Department of Social Services</u> website.

The Department of Social Services' new application for performance reporting will:

- be a web-based portal

- allow submission of data through approved external / third party applications

- support submission of data through other approved methods.

Performance information that will be required to be collected may include (but is not limited to):

- client identity characteristics

- client demographic characteristics

- service delivery information

- client outcomes.

12.5 Evaluation

The Department of Social Services will evaluate the Try, Test and Learn Fund and each project funded by it to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. Your grant agreement requires you to provide information to help with this evaluation.

12.6 Acknowledgment

All materials related to grants under the program must acknowledge the Commonwealth as follows:

'Try, Test and Learn Fund – an Australian Government initiative'.

12.7 Probity

The Australian Government will make sure that the Try, Test and Learn Fund grant program process is fair; according to the published guidelines; incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct; and is consistent with the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines*.

Note: these guidelines may be changed from time to time by the Department of Social Services. When this happens, the revised guidelines will be published on GrantConnect.

12.8 Complaints process

The Department of Social Services Complaints Procedures apply to complaints about the Try, Test and Learn Fund grant program. All complaints about a grant process must be lodged in writing.

Any questions that you have about grant decisions for the grant program should be sent to support@communitygrants.gov.au.

Applicants can contact the complaints service with complaints about the Community Grants Hub's service(s) or the application process.

Details of what constitutes an eligible complaint can be provided upon request by the Community Grants Hub. Applicants can lodge complaints through the complaints form on the Department's website or through the following channels:

Telephone:	1800 634 035
Fax:	(02) 6204 4587
Mail:	DSS Complaints PO Box 9820 Canberra Business Centre ACT 2610

Alternatively, a complaint can be made in person at any Department of Social Services office.

If an applicant is at any time dissatisfied with the handling of a complaint by the Department of Social Services or the Community Grants Hub, they can contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman by:

Mail:	Commonwealth Ombudsman GPO Box 442 Canberra ACT 2601
Phone:	(Toll free) 1300 362 072
Email:	ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au
Website:	www.ombudsman.gov.au

Applicants can also lodge a complaint about the Department of Social Services or the Community Grants Hub using the complaints form on the complaints page of the Commonwealth Ombudsman website.

12.9　　　Conflict of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if a Community Grants Hub staff member, any member of a committee or advisor and / or you or any of your personnel:

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer,

- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently, or

- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives funding under the grant program.

As part of your application, you will be asked to declare any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify that there is an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest or that one might arise in relation to a grant application, you must inform the Community Grants Hub in writing immediately. Committee members and other officials, including the decision maker, must also declare any conflicts of interest.

The chair of the expert panel will be made aware of any conflicts of interest and will handle them as set out in Australian Government policies and procedures. Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be handled as set out in the Australian Public Service Code of Conduct (Section 13(7)) of the *Public Service Act 1999*). We publish our conflict of interest policy on the Community Grants Hub website.

12.10　　　Privacy: confidentiality and protection of personal information

We treat your personal information according to the 13 Australian Privacy Principles and the *Privacy Act 1988*. This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect

- why we collect your personal information

- who we give your personal information to.

As part of your application, you are required to declare your ability to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988,* including the Australian Privacy Principles, and to impose the same privacy obligations on any subcontractors that you engage to assist with the grant activity.[28] You must ask for the Australian Government's consent in writing before disclosing confidential information.

Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else if you are given reasonable notice of the disclosure; where disclosure is authorised or required by law or is reasonably

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[28] See glossary.

necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law; if it will prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to a person's life or health; or if you have consented to the disclosure.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information about grant applicants and grant recipients under the grant program in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

We may reveal confidential information to:

- employees and contractors of our department so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities

- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery

- other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations

- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner

- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

We may share the information you give us with other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes including government administration, research or service delivery and according to Australian laws, including the:

- *Public Service Act 1999*

- *Public Service Regulations 1999*

- *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act*

- *Privacy Act 1988*

- *Crimes Act 1914*

- *Criminal Code Act 1995.*

We'll treat the information you give us as sensitive and therefore confidential if it meets all of the four conditions below:

1. You clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential.

2. The information is commercially sensitive.

3. Revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else.

4. You provide the information with an understanding that it will stay confidential.

The grant agreement will include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the grant agreement.

12.11   Freedom of Information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about the grant program, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act)*.*

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

By mail: Freedom of Information Coordinator
                The Department of Social Services
                Government and Executive Services Branch
                GPO Box 9820
                Canberra ACT 2601

By email: foi@dss.gov.au

12.12   Consultation

Stakeholders have been consulted on the design of Tranche 2. Feedback was sought from co-development and other participants from Tranche 1. In addition, a Post-Implementation Review was conducted on the Tranche 1 process and its outcomes informed Tranche 2.

13. Glossary

Term	Definition
Assessment criteria	The specified principles or standards against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive granting activity, to determine applicant rankings.
Capital expenditure	Capital expenditure is spending for capital items as defined in the Department's Capital Works Policy. A capital item is any item of real estate or infrastructure valued at $10,000 or more (including GST). Capital items include, but are not limited to: • land • new and existing buildings, including demountable buildings that are a fixture to the land • building renovations • roads, pipelines and airstrips.
Co-development	The co-development process for a Tranche 2 grant will involve brief consultation with stakeholders to collaboratively refine and optimise approved projects and may result in small adjustments to make the project design as efficient and effective as possible.
Commencement date	The expected start date for the grant activity.
Completion date	The expected date that the grant activity must be completed and the grant spent by.
Date of effect	This will depend on the particular grant. It can be the date in which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date. Where there is no grant agreement, entities must publish information on individual grants as soon as practicable.
Decision maker	The person who makes a decision to award a grant.
Eligibility criteria	The principles, standards or rules that a grant applicant must meet to qualify for consideration of a grant. Eligibility criteria may apply in addition to assessment criteria.
Grant	A grant is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth: a) under which relevant money or other CRF money, is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth b) which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives

Term	Definition
Grant activity	The project / tasks / services that the grantee is required to undertake with the grant money. It is described in the Grant Agreement
Grant agreement	Sets out the relationship between the parties to the agreement, and specifies the details of the grant.
Grant Agreement Manager	Monitors performance against agreed objectives within grant agreements and ensure accountability requirements are met.
Grant opportunity	A notice published on GrantConnect advertising the availability of Commonwealth grants.
Grant program	May be advertised within the 'Forecast Opportunity' (FO) section of GrantConnect to provide a consolidated view of associated grant opportunities and provide strategic context for specific grant opportunities.
Grantee	An individual / organisation that has been awarded a grant.
Inter-departmental Committee	A Committee of Australian Government departments which provides governance for the Priority Investment Approach, including the Try, Test and Learn Fund. The Committee includes the Departments of Social Services, Human Services, Employment, Education and Training, Health, Prime Minister and Cabinet, and Finance; the Treasury; the Australian Bureau of Statistics; and the Australian Government Actuary.
Selection criteria	Comprise eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.
Selection process	The method used to select potential grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and / or the assessment criteria.