



Applying for Grants

A How-to Resource
by YACWA

yacwa

ABOUT YACWA

The Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA) is the peak non-government youth organisation in Western Australia. YACWA operates primarily as a human rights organisation that seeks to address the exclusion of young people in a rapidly changing society.

Our vision for Western Australia is one that celebrates and engages young people in all aspects of the community. Our role is to strengthen the trust, cooperation, collaboration, professionalism, and voice of the non-government youth service sector to better serve the young people of Western Australia.

YACWA is widely acknowledged as a leader in the field of current youth participation best practice. This reputation has a national profile and is supported by academic research, proven training, and project management and, most importantly, extensive engagement with children and young people. YACWA strongly believes that children and young people are the 'experts in their own experiences and wellbeing' and we are dedicated to ensuring their equal access to participation in community decision-making processes.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the lands, waterways and plains on which we live, work and play. This land always has been and always will be Aboriginal land.

We extend our respect to Elders, both from the past and those who guide us today, and we embrace this connection with all young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who we work alongside of.

BACKGROUND

Grants can feel complicated, but are so necessary in the community services industry. YACWA have prepared this toolkit to help you navigate available grants, and to help you prepare applications.

In the community services industry, grants serve to assist organisations and community groups to achieve their strategic outcomes, in a way that aligns with the intent of the grant agency.

KEY DEFINITIONS

We've created a bank of key definitions that are used a lot in the world of grants.

Acquittal/acquit	In the grant world, this is a report or evaluation once the project has been completed to show the grant agency the outcome of the funding. In short, they serve as evidence so grant agencies know that the funding that was distributed was spent in a way that's consistent with why it was awarded.
Community need	This is basically the 'why' your project is necessary. You should outline the community need as part of your application, and this could be anything including improving education, employment, housing, mental health or social connectedness outcomes. The community need is effectively the purpose of the project.
Evaluation	Okay you've completed your project, did it role out as you expected? Were there any unexpected outcomes, such as overwhelming interest in online components, or really low uptake of program elements? What worked best, what could have had more success? Evaluation processes are an opportunity for your organisation to consider how projects might be altered in the future to have more successful outcomes.
Funding pool	Funding pool is basically the 'bucket of money' that the grant funding will be drawn from.
Grant agency	The department/agency/organisation/business who is giving out grants.
Grant guidelines	A document that grant agencies release to provide information about the specific grant round. This will detail their preferred outcomes and the finer details of the grant process.
In-kind contribution	An in-kind contribution is basically something that will contribute toward the project, that isn't necessarily being funded by the grant. An example of this is volunteer labour (which can be calculated at \$30/hr in value), or use of a venue at your organisation (the in-kind contribution would be the usual room-hire rate).
Invoice	An invoice is a document that requests an amount of money in exchange for a service or outcome. If you are successful when submitting a grant application, you will often need to send an invoice to the grant agency to have the funds released to your organisation's bank account.
Outcomes	What will happen as a result of the project? This is an outcome of the project.

Having a project identified that will meet a community need

Before you can apply for a grant, you need to have a project ready to go that can achieve a particular outcome for your community. This project will need to be evidence based, and your organisation/partnership will need to have the skills and capacity to deliver the project.

We provide prompts on how to create a project plan in the next section of this document.

Finding suitable grants

Once you have a project in mind, and have identified what the general outcomes of the project will be, you can start looking for suitable grants.

There are a number of sites that compile available grants for ease of access. These include:

- Grant Connect (grants.gov.au)
- Grant Guru (grantguru.com/au)
- The Grants Hub (thegrantshub.com.au)
- Funding Centre (fundingcentre.com.au)

Most government departments and local governments also have their own grant websites, which may be updated more regularly than the few sites listed above. Please note that the resources listed are a snapshot of the sites available, and not an exhaustive list. You can have a look at what's on these sites to see what grants are available (and what might suit your project), and to get a feel for what is required in a grant application.

Review grant guidelines

Most grants will have guidelines that specify the purpose of the grant, and the outcomes that it is seeking to achieve. You can generally view the grant guidelines by looking at the relevant web-page. If you can't find this information, you can call the funding agency and request this information.

You will need to consider whether your project is consistent with the grant guidelines. Some other notable points to look out for include:

- Due date of grant
- Contact information for grant agency
- Prescribed project start date (outlined by grant agency)
- Grant period (latest date that grant funds can be used)
- Acquittal requirements and associated timelines

Have a pre-lodgement conversation with grant agency

We highly recommend speaking with the grant agency before submitting an application. Often they can help you emphasise the key points of your project that are particularly consistent with the grant guidelines, and can let you know what factors of your project aren't a high priority for the grant agency. They can also help guide your application, to make the process easier for you.

While the person who works for the funding agency can help you, they can't guarantee a positive outcome. There are often boards who assess grant applications, in order to be more transparent throughout the process.

The person who works for the funding agency can't help you design your project, they can only give advice on what their agency is looking for.

GRANT PROCESS EXPLAINED *(Continued)*

PRE-LODGEMENT	Review grant application form and collate required information	<p>Now that you've got a project in mind, have read the grant guidelines and have spoken with the grant agency, you're ready to review the grant form and start collating information.</p> <p>You'll generally be able to view a full grant form before having to fill in the form. This gives you the opportunity to review what the grant agency will ask you before you start an application.</p>
	Prepare grant application	<p>You're ready to start preparing your application! We suggest working through the questions, and reaching out to the grant agency if you're having any trouble throughout the process.</p> <p>When you're responding to questions, make sure to include evidence of the expected outcomes of your program. Always make sure to directly show how your project will achieve the requirements of the grant guidelines.</p>
	Submit application	<p>You've written and reviewed your application, and a senior member of staff has approved the application. Now hit submit before the due date closes.</p>
	Await determination	<p>The grant guidelines will generally tell you how long grant agencies will need to assess your application. This varies a lot between grant rounds, so we really recommend you look out for this on the relevant grant website.</p>
OUTCOME	Negative determination	<p>There are a lot of reasons why your grant application might be refused. We highly recommend calling the grant agency for feedback on your application, so you can find out how to improve for future applications.</p>
	Positive determination	<p>Yippee, your grant application has been approved! 🎉</p>
GRANT MANAGEMENT	Implement program	<p>Implement your program in line with the project that was approved by the grant agency.</p> <p>People working at grant agencies are very helpful. If you need to modify any aspect of your project then we highly recommend you speak with the grant agency before making any changes.</p>
	Acquit grant	<p>In a lot of cases, you will need to acquit your grant after your project/activity has been implemented. The detail of this is dependent on the grant agency.</p> <p>In most cases, your organisation will not be eligible to apply for grants if you have outstanding acquittal reporting with a grant agency. This means that you may be blocking your organisation from accessing grant opportunities in the future if you don't acquit your grant.</p>

WHERE TO FIND GRANTS

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HOW TO CHECK YOUR ELIGIBILITY

When you're looking at potential grants, you'll see that grant agencies outline eligibility criteria. This criteria serves to make sure that organisations, groups, businesses and individuals who apply for grants are appropriately structured to receive the funds.

This protects grant funds, by making sure that the funds are managed appropriately and are being used for their intended purpose.

PREPARING A PROJECT PLAN

Some grant agencies will require you to submit a project plan with your application. A project plan functions to provide all of the details of a project in a clear and concise format.

On the following page is an example template of a project plan, which you're welcome to use to help put together your application.

PREPARING A PROJECT PLAN *(Continued)*

Title	The title or project name
About your organisation/group/business	<p>Grant agencies will generally want to have some context on your organisation/group/business. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How long you've been operating • Core function • Values • How you're governed (eg a Not-For-Profit governed by a Board) • Target group(s) you work with
Need for your project	You will need to outline why your project is necessary to contribute toward some part of the community. You may like to include data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, or that you have collected through your organisation, to substantiate your reasoning.
Project objective	This should be one or two sentences that outline why you're undertaking this project. The purpose should ideally link back to your organisations strategic goal, and the desired outcomes from the grant guidelines.
Target audience	Outline who will benefit from your program. If your grant guideline has a specific target audience that needs to be included, make sure to include them.
How project will be implemented	<p>This is where most of the detail should be. This section should outline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the project will be included as part of your organisation? • Who will help with the project? • What skills/specialty does your organisation have, that makes you well equipped to deliver this program?
Timelines for delivery/key dates	<p>You should outline the scheduled start time (be respectful of the grant assessment timeline, you may have to have the scheduled start time more than 6 months after when you submit the grant application.</p> <p>You'll also need to detail when you expect the program to end, and when you would have the evaluation process complete. Grant agencies will then use this information to set your acquittal date.</p> <p>Some grants will have set timelines, for example 12 months from the start date. This will be outlined in the grant guideline documents.</p>
Resourcing (staff requirement)	<p>Outline how many people/who will be required to run the project.</p> <p>Make sure to think about staff, volunteers, blow-ins, experts and facilitators. A pathway for participants to become employees is always a nice element to tie in.</p>
Resourcing (equipment requirement)	<p>What 'stuff' do you need to run the program?</p> <p>Make sure to include both things your organisation already owns, and anything new that needs to be purchased.</p>
Partnerships	Outline any other organisations, groups or businesses who will be involved in your project. Specify what they will do.
Outcomes	What will the outcomes be from your project? Try to think 'big picture' about this – it could broadly be improved mental health outcomes,

SOURCES OF DATA

As part of preparing a project plan, you will need to provide evidence on why your project is necessary for the community. To help with this, we suggest you include data in your application. Some key sources of data are provided below:

Australian Bureau of Statistics (abs.gov.au)

Australia has a census every five years, which collects key data about the population. The Australian Bureau of Statistics runs the census and releases the data, and they're an incredible resource for key demographic information.

Jobs and Skills Atlas (jobsandskills.gov.au/data/jobs-and-skills-atlas)

Jobs and Skills Australia is a federal agency tasked with helping people overcome barriers to employment. Their Jobs and Skills Atlas is a great resource to determine the types of employment pathways available all across Australia. The Jobs and Skills Atlas can provide very detailed information on trends in workforces and sectors, and presents information based on regions.

Community Impact Hub (communityimpacthub.wa.gov.au)

The Community Impact Hub includes a 'Community Insight' tool, which collates a range of data to provide information. This is delivered by region, and gives you the options to look at a diverse range of data at a highly localised level.

HOW TO WRITE AN APPLICATION

So you've prepared a project and have found a grant that's right for you. Next you'll need to get familiar with the grant guidelines. Grant guidelines are the documents that grant agencies use to outline what they are looking to achieve with their funds.

The grant guidelines are what grant agencies use to determine which projects receive funds. When you are looking at potential grants for your project, make sure that you check to make sure your project aligns with the grant guidelines. As you're writing your grant application, make sure to make it explicitly clear how your project aligns with the grant guidelines. This could be as simple as writing responses in dot point form.

It's always good to use evidence to justify why your project is necessary, and how it will generate a positive impact to your community. We suggest using a combination of data (such as data accessible via the Australia Bureau of Statistics) and research (such as studies from academia or case studies from the industry) to improve your justification. Including data that your organisation has collected, including things like age, suburb and number of people accessing your organisation, can also help demonstrate to funding agencies the need for your project, and how it will improve outcomes for your community.

Particularly if you are seeking funding to run a program for young people, we strongly recommend working with young people to co-design your project. This will ensure your project is relevant to the young people in your area, while also giving young people access to more opportunities through the co-design process. [You can read more about how to engage young people here.](#)

BUDGET

An important part of your grant application is a project budget. A budget for a project should include all costs associated with the program, and the contribution that's being requested from a grant agency.

An example budget is shown on the following page. This is an example only, and will vary depending on the project that you're seeking funding for.

EXAMPLE BUDGET

TYPE	ITEM/DETAIL	EXCL. GST	INCL. GST
Staffing	Staff member 1 (e.g. Project Officer SCHADS level 3.2 for one day a week / 6 months)		
	Staff member 2		
	Staff member 3		
	Staff member 4		
	Sub-contractor		
Travel	Flights		
	Taxis (i.e. to and from airport)		
	Mileage (80c/km)		
	Car hire / fuel		
	Accommodation		
	Meal allowance / day		
Resources and technology	Gift cards or other incentives (see youth participation policy)		
	Workshop / event resources / food		
	Printing costs		
	Laptop		
	Phone related costs		
Other	Access and inclusion costs (i.e. interpreter, document translation, counsellor)		
	EAP		
	Contingency		
SUB TOTAL			
Project management (10% to 35%)			
TOTAL			

SOME EXAMPLES OF THINGS TO ASK GRANT AGENCIES

There's a bit of information that your organisation might be interested in knowing that isn't necessarily included in the Grant Guideline document. A few of our key questions are detailed below. You can use these as touch-points to ask grant agencies, to help with your grant application or management of your grant.

Is the grant GST inclusive/exclusive?

The money minded person who issues invoices from within your organisation will be very interested to know whether the invoice to the grant agency is GST inclusive or exclusive. If this isn't specified in the grant agreement, we always recommend contacting the grant agency to find out this information.

What is the longevity of funding rounds?

Not all grant rounds are made the same. Some grant rounds are available every year, whereas others are only available sporadically. Funding rounds can change with changes in government, priorities and money available, and therefore grants can be challenging to navigate on an ongoing basis.

We recommend looking into whether a grant round will be run again, or if it is a one-off for the funding agency.

As an example, grants distributed by YACWA are often part of larger agreements with large government or community organisations. We are often given the opportunity to distribute funding on 3-year basis, which means we can't guarantee that funding rounds we oversee are continued in the future.

What is the overall size of funding pool?

The amount of money in a funding pool can vary greatly, but we suggest always being aware of how much money is in a funding pool.

You can use this information to work out roughly how many projects will be funded through the grant round, and how competitive the funding round will be. As an example, if a funding pool is \$100,000 but the maximum amount that can be applied for is \$50,000, there's a chance that only two projects will be funded.

In contrast to this, if the funding pool is \$100,000 but the maximum amount that can be applied for is \$5,000, then at least 20 projects will be funded through the round.

What are the timelines to deliver the project?

Some funding agencies will have very firm timelines for project delivery, for example by the end of the calendar or financial year. You should be aware of these timelines, and be conscious of whether your organisation has the capacity to deliver the project within this timeframe.

What are the key dates?

Alongside timelines to deliver the project, another important date is the acquittal date. At YACWA, we always try to ensure grant recipients have 6 weeks between when their project ends before an acquittal is required.

We structure our timelines this way to give grant recipients time to evaluate their program, consider any key learnings and go through the acquittal reporting with ample time to spare.

As mentioned above, if you ever need to update your projects dates, we suggest speaking with the relevant funding body.

(Continued on following page)

Flexibility in delivering project(s)?

We know that unforeseen issues happen, which might change your organisation's capacity to deliver a program in a way that's completely consistent with what the funding agency requires. We recommend having a chat with the funding agency about what the process is to update the details of your project, if required.

The response to this will often vary. At YACWA, we always recommend that grant recipients reach out to chat with us if their project needs to be updated, or if you need more time to finish your project.

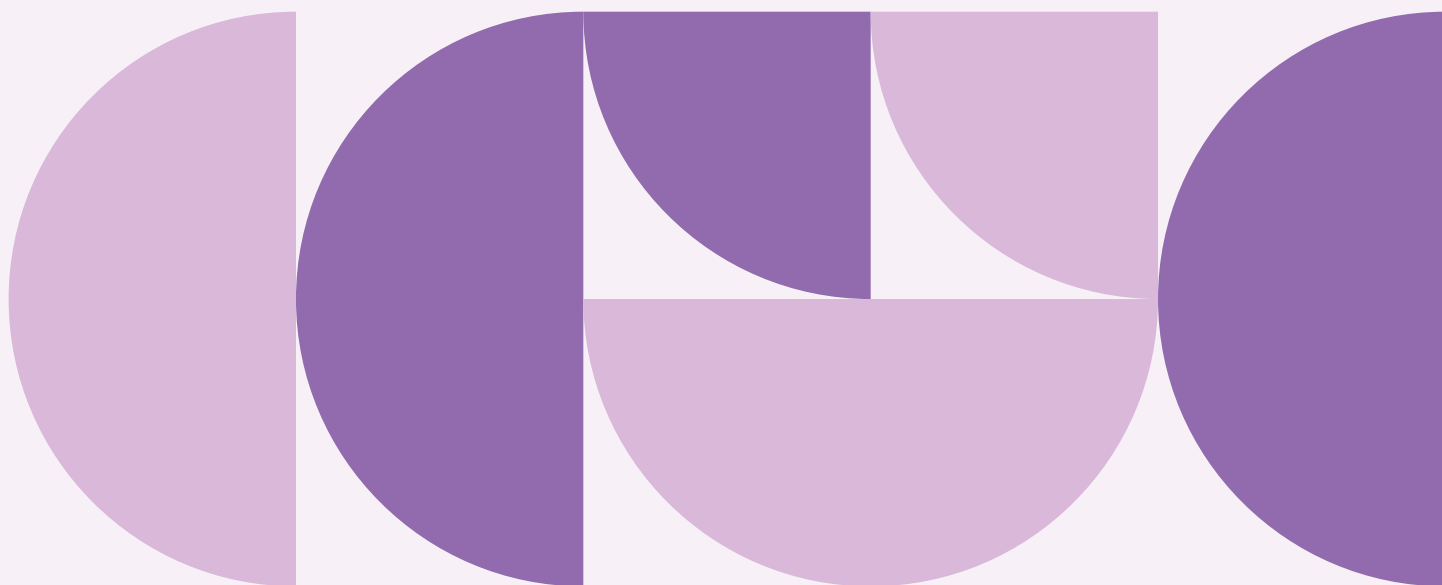
What are the key contact details?

A lot of the time, grant agencies will have a generic contact for grant-related enquiries. We suggest making a note of these details, and double checking with the grant agency if there's a particular staff member who will be overseeing grants.

WHERE ELSE YOU CAN GET HELP

If you're looking for more information online about the grant process, we highly recommend checking out the Western Australian Community Impact Hub (communityimpacthub.wa.gov.au/).

This online hub is an initiative of Lotterywest and Healthway, and functions to provide data, knowledge and insight about the social impact of grants funding and community wellbeing initiative in WA.



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