



GROWING LOCAL ECONOMIES

Fact sheet

OVERVIEW

The Growing Local Economies Fund is part of the NSW Government's \$1.3 billion Regional Growth Fund and is designed to deliver economic growth and productivity in regional NSW. The fund will invest in infrastructure projects right across regional NSW to ensure economic prosperity is spread around the state.

The objective of the fund is to support projects of economic significance in regional NSW, which draw on the strengths or potential strengths of each functional economic region.

ELIGIBILITY

Growing Local Economies will make funding available for projects in regional NSW outside Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong.

Project applications are invited from local councils or Joint Organisations of Councils; Aboriginal Land Councils; infrastructure providers, such as telecommunications, energy or water companies; peak bodies such as incorporated business, industry and community associations; cooperatives; educational institutions; and incorporated not-for-profit organisations. Applications involving public-private partnerships or leveraging other funding streams (such

as Commonwealth or local government funding) are encouraged.

PURPOSE OF FUNDS

The Growing Local Economies Fund is designed to deliver economic growth and productivity in regional NSW.

Projects must be for infrastructure that:


- is for the use and benefit of multiple organisations or businesses
- enables or brings forward investment or productivity improvements for new or existing industry
- delivers a net economic benefit to residents and business located in NSW.

Wherever possible, projects should support local procurement, job creation and skills development.

GRANT FUNDING

Up to \$500 million is available under the Growing Local Economies Fund. The minimum grant amount is \$1 million and there is no maximum grant amount.

All projects must have a minimum financial co-contribution of 25 per cent of the total grant amount, which must be from sources other than the Restart NSW Fund and must be confirmed.



An exemption from the minimum 25 per cent co-contribution requirement may be granted where a project is located in a disadvantaged area of NSW. Applicants must submit a case for the exemption with evidence demonstrating the disadvantage. The starting point for measuring disadvantage for this fund is the **Socio-Economic Index for Areas** (SEIFA), published by the ABS.

Other considerations may be:

- impact of significant industry decline or business closure
- recovery from a significant natural disaster
- significant recent change in population or community demographics
- other exceptional circumstances.

ASSESSMENT

Eligible projects will be assessed against four program criteria

Criterion 1: Strategic assessment

Applicants must demonstrate how a project meets the objectives and eligibility criteria of the program.

Applications must demonstrate that the project aligns with the relevant Regional Economic Development Strategy, or with regional specialisations or endowments. Projects must also align with broader NSW Government strategies or plans.

Criterion 2: Economic assessment

Applicants must demonstrate how projects will have a positive impact on productivity and economic growth in NSW. Projects will need to achieve a benefit-to-cost ratio greater than 1.0. The NSW Government will undertake cost-benefit analysis of all Growing Local Economies projects.

Criterion 3: Affordability

Applicants must demonstrate that proposed projects are financially viable in the future, taking into account net life cycle cost impacts and allowing for ongoing operating and maintenance costs.

Project applications must include construction, operating and maintenance costs, noting that regular operating and maintenance costs will not be covered by this fund. The construction cost estimates should be supported by estimations or quotes, and include all margins and overheads, project and construction management costs, and an appropriate amount of contingency for the project stage and risks.

Criterion 4: Deliverability

Applicants must demonstrate that they have the capacity and capability to deliver the project through robust strategies for procurement, project management and risk management.

Applicants should provide evidence of support from local stakeholders.

Where relevant, past performance on delivery of other NSW Government funded projects will be considered.

HOW TO APPLY

Applying for the Growing Local Economies Fund is a two-step process.

Step one: Applicants are required to contact the Office of Regional Development to check if their proposed project is eligible.

If your proposed project is eligible, the Office of Regional Development will invite you to submit an expression of interest and a brief data sheet for assessment.

Step two: Depending on the outcome of step one in the assessment process, selected applicants will be requested to formally submit a business case for consideration. The NSW Government can provide guidance on business case development.

Questions about the program can be emailed to regionalsw.business@dpc.nsw.gov.au, including queries about eligibility and the application process.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Email: regionalsw.business@dpc.nsw.gov.au

Phone: 1300 679 673

nsw.gov.au/growinglocaleconomies