

COVID-19 Community Connection and Wellbeing Program Pathways 1, 2 and 3

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

I have a question about the program

What is the COVID-19 Community Connection and Wellbeing Program?

In response to COVID-19–related lockdowns and social restrictions, the COVID-19 Community Connection and Wellbeing Program will support the building of community resilience through locally led social activities and initiatives to restore, enhance and sustain long-term wellbeing.

With a strong focus on encouraging people to reconnect and re-engage with their communities, the program aims to:

- improve social connectedness
- increase the confidence and capability of communities to foster and maintain the health and wellbeing of their members
- support communities to become more resilient to the social disruptions and wellbeing impacts caused by the pandemic (and other disaster events).

Who administers this program?

Resilience NSW administers and manages this program on behalf of the NSW Government.

Resilience NSW is the lead disaster management agency for NSW, responsible for disaster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery, and for building community resilience to future disasters.

I have a question about available funding

How much funding can I apply for?

The program consists of two funding streams:

- Pathway 1 of the funding program offers between \$75,001 and \$300,000 for larger scale projects that will be completed over a longer period (up to 22 months)
- Pathway 2 of the program offers between \$10,001 and \$75,000 for small to medium scale short-term projects (can be delivered within 12 months) that focus on local needs.
- Pathway 3 of the program offers between \$1,000 and \$10,000 for small projects or events that focus on local needs that can be delivered within 1-6 months.

Will my project be fully funded?

For all projects, funding will be provided for the value of the project as outlined in the application, unless the assessment panel reviewing the project applications recommends partial funding. Funding for Pathway 1 and Pathway 2 grants will be released against three project milestones, based on appropriate evidence that agreed benchmarks have been achieved. Funding will be released upon execution of a funding agreement for Pathway 3 projects.

Can I apply for additional funding for my project after 12 months?

Approved Pathway 1 recipients may apply for additional funding for allocation at the 12-month project milestone. Additional funding is subject to an assessment against agreed key performance indicators. Additional funding will be managed via a request for project variation from a funded lead agency.

Preference will be given to projects that aim to build social connection, resilience and wellbeing in a sustainable, socially embedded way.

I have a question about eligibility

Who can apply for Pathway 1 and Pathway 2 of the program?

Eligible applicants include:

- charitable and not-for-profit organisations
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations
- unincorporated community groups auspiced by an organisation eligible to apply in its own right
- local councils
- joint organisations of councils.

Who can apply for Pathway 3 of the program?

Pathway 3 is designed for small scale community-based organisations. Eligible applicants include:

- charitable and not-for-profit organisations
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations
- unincorporated community groups auspiced by an organisation eligible to apply in its own right.

If I apply for Pathway 3 funding, can I also apply through Pathway 1 or 2 for the same project?

No. If you have applied for Pathway 3 funding then you cannot apply for funding from Pathway 1 or 2 for the same project. Projects cannot be funded across more than one pathway.

What are examples of eligible projects?

Examples of eligible projects for all three pathways include:

- community events and social activities to support community recovery and capacity building
- recreational programs to improve wellbeing, strengthen community engagement and connectedness
- culturally specific community connection programs and activities
- programs to support the connection and wellbeing of highly impacted community segments
- peer support programs, mentoring and training
- partnerships between larger and smaller organisations to deliver programs and activities.

What are examples of ineligible projects?

Examples of ineligible projects for all three pathways include:

- clinical mental health interventions (such as psychology or psychotherapy services)
- projects that provide direct commercial or exclusive benefit to a business not directly related to the project
- projects and/or activities that do not meet and address the program criteria
- projects that are a duplication of existing programs available in the community
- projects with an existing funding source
- infrastructure projects (such as building works or structural repairs)
- projects that have already commenced and are requesting retrospective funding or are complete.

Am I eligible to apply for additional funding after 12 months if I am successful for Pathway 2 or Pathway 3 funding?

No. Approved Pathway 1 recipients may receive an additional funding allocation at the 12-month project milestone if they meet specific performance benchmarks. Pathway 2 and Pathway 3 funding recipients are not eligible to apply for additional funding.

I have a question about the application process

When do applications close?

Applications close at 5 pm AEST on 2 May 2022.

Applications will be assessed between 3 May and June 2022. Please note, this period may vary subject to the number of applications received.

When will funded projects be announced?

Successful applications will be announced in June 2022. However, this date may vary subject to the number of applications received.

How will I find out if my application was successful?

Resilience NSW will notify all applicants of decisions by email.

What will I need to start my application?

Before starting the application, you will need to:

- read the relevant program guidelines and these FAQs
- check you are eligible to apply
- check the project is eligible and within the program scope
- identify project costs that are eligible for funding.

Can I make changes to my application once it has been submitted?

No. You cannot make changes to your application after you've submitted it via the online portal. However, you can save your application as a draft and come back to it at any time prior to the closing date.

How do I start my application?

To start your application, access the online application portal at <https://oem-cp.enquire.cloud/rounds> by logging in and then select the correct pathway. You will need to complete and submit the application by 5 pm AEST on 2 May 2022.

Is there another way to submit my application?

No. All applications are to be submitted via the online portal.

Can I apply on behalf of another entity?

Only one organisation can apply for funding. If funding is approved, this organisation will be considered the project's lead entity and will need to enter a binding agreement with Resilience NSW.

The lead entity will receive funding amounts and be expected to undertake periodic project and financial reporting.

You may seek third-party help from outside of your organisation to assist with your grant application. However, all applications will need to be submitted via the lead organisation's business account in the online portal.

Can my organisation work with another for this project?

Yes. Applications developed in partnership between local councils and local community groups are strongly encouraged to maximise the reach and efficacy of proposed projects.

Documented evidence of proposed partnerships must be included in the online application. This can include letters of support from partner organisations and/or community representatives. If funding is approved, the organisation that applies for the funding must:

- meet the eligibility criteria
- enter into a binding agreement with the NSW Government for delivery of the project.

This lead organisation will be paid any funding amounts and will need to undertake periodic project and financial reporting.

Are word limits applied to questions in the application?

Each question in the application has a character count limit. You can see the character limit that applies to the question in the bottom right-hand corner of the text box. Most, but not all, text questions will have a 2000-character limit per question. Remember to be clear and concise when answering each question.

Do I need to include cost estimates and quotes in my grant application?

Pathway 1 and 2 applicants will need to provide estimated project costs in the application. Pathway 3 applicants must provide a budget based on valid cost estimates. These costs need to be reasonable.

If you already have formal quotes for goods or services for your project, you can upload these online in the *Supporting Documents* section to support your estimated project costs.

What if my project cost runs over budget and I use more money than I thought I would, or I run out of money halfway through?

You should develop your project's proposed expenditure using quotes from suppliers, or from your own expertise in delivering a similar project.

It is your responsibility to develop a realistic budget for your application, manage the approved funding in line with your application and comply with the funding agreement.

You cannot include an allowance of contingency of funds in your application. Any additional cost outside of the approved grant amount will be at your own expense.

Do I need to include GST in my quotes or estimations?

All awarded grants will be GST-exclusive. If an organisation is registered for GST, this will be applied on top of the agreed grant value when payment is made. All budget items should be itemised exclusive of GST.

If I am not registered for GST, can I still apply?

Yes. You do not need to be registered for GST to apply. If successful, you will not be paid any GST on top of the agreed grant value.

Can I start my project before I receive funding?

No. Your project must start after you have been notified that your application is successful and the funding agreement has been executed. Resilience NSW may withdraw a funding offer if a funding agreement is not signed and returned by the successful applicant within 10 days of being issued by Resilience NSW.

I have a question about the required supporting documents

What documents will I need to provide to support my application?

The following information is required in the application:

- details of the project
- project location
- needs justification
- key milestones (initiation, delivery and completion) with key project tasks and forecast delivery timeline (Pathway 1 and 2 only)
- project budget
- risk management plan including COVID-safe delivery, contingency plans, assumptions, constraints and dependencies (Pathway 1 and 2 only).
- intended outcomes.

Additional supporting documentation uploaded with your online application may include:

- evidence of entity type (e.g. constitution, annual reports, financial statements)
- support letters from partner agencies
- landowner consent (if applicable).

I have a question about the selection criteria

What are the selection criteria and how will they be considered when assessing my project?

Please refer to the relevant program guidelines for full details of the assessment criteria and process.

I have a question about successful projects

What happens if my application is successful?

If your application is approved, you will need to:

- enter into a funding agreement with the NSW Government. This funding agreement is administered by Resilience NSW on behalf of the NSW Government and must be signed within 10 days of being issued for signature
- start and complete funded activities by the dates specified in your funding agreement
- notify Resilience NSW in writing of any changes to your project
- complete your project by 30 June 2024
- contact Resilience NSW if you need to apply for an extension
- report on your project as specified in your funding agreement
- acknowledge the financial support of the NSW Government as outlined in your funding agreement.

How is funding distributed?

For Pathways 1 and 2

Resilience NSW will distribute funding in instalments. Details of payment arrangements for successful applicants will be identified in the funding agreement.

Payment arrangements will correspond with the completion of 3 project milestones across the funding period.

For Pathway 3

Payment will be made in one instalment to recipients on execution of a funding agreement with Resilience NSW.

What evidence do I need to provide to show I am undertaking the project or have completed the project?

You will need to:

- complete periodic reporting on expenditure (not required for Pathway 3 funded projects)
- complete periodic reporting on project progress to date (not required for Pathway 3 funded projects)
- acquit the project and submit final expenditure and outcomes reporting within 3 months of completion of the project.

These requirements will vary depending on which pathway you are funded under. Your funding agreement will provide more details of your reporting obligations and any documentation needed.

Can I talk about my project in the media or promote it locally?

Once all funding announcements are made, you will be able to promote your project. Resilience NSW will advise you of any applicable media communication conditions at the time of funding approval.

Can I change my project once I've received funding?

Any variation to the project as detailed in the application form must be agreed to in writing by Resilience NSW.

What happens if I don't spend all the allocated funding?

You must account for and acquit all expenditure upon completion of the project. You will need to return any unspent funds or those funds that have not been spent in accordance with the funding agreement to the NSW Government via Resilience NSW.

Am I required to provide financial reports over the lifetime of the project?

Yes. Pathway 1 and 2 recipients will need to provide an update on budget and expenditure in the progress reports and the final project report. Pathway 3 recipients will only need to provide a final project report and financial acquittal.

Project reporting and acquittal details will be outlined in the funding agreement.

What happens if I do not complete my project?

If there are unforeseen circumstances that delay your project, you may apply to extend the agreed delivery date of the project. You can apply for an extension by submitting a request to vary your project and agreement.

Your request will need to outline the reasons for the delay, outline actions taken to minimise the impact of the delay and include a proposed adjusted project timeline with new milestones.

Resilience NSW will consider and grant extensions on an individual basis, and in exceptional circumstances. This request would be considered as a variation to the project as detailed in the application form and must be agreed to in writing by Resilience NSW.

When does my project need to start?

You will need to start within 2 months of execution of the funding agreement. Ideally you will start sooner to allow adequate time for implementation, reporting and acquittal – though this may vary from project to project.

Resilience NSW will monitor each project's compliance against the funding agreement. You will also need to provide a final report, with financial acquittal and supporting documentation, within three months of project completion.

Does Resilience NSW monitor the progress of my project?

Yes. All recipients will need to submit reports as outlined in their funding agreement. More regular reporting may be required depending on the risk profile, size and type of project.

Lead agencies must keep, and provide if necessary, proper financial reports and operational records and registers. Failure to do so may affect an organisation or organisation's eligibility for continued funding through the COVID-19 Community Connection and Wellbeing Program.

I have a question about unsuccessful projects

My application was not successful. Where can I get feedback?

The Resilience NSW Investment and Grants branch may provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants as required. Please email requests to CCCWP@resilience.nsw.gov.au.

I am having technical issues when completing my online application?

How can I get assistance?

If you are experiencing difficulties with the online application, please contact Resilience NSW at CCCWP@resilience.nsw.gov.au and we will respond to your enquiry as soon as possible (within business hours).

I can't find an answer to my question

I have a general question about applying – who do I contact?

Resilience NSW regional staff may be able to assist with general information that is publicly available in the guidelines.

I can't find my question in this list of FAQs. Where can I get more help?

If you need further information about eligibility criteria, time frames and costs, or if you have a question about the application form, please email Resilience NSW at CCCWP@resilience.nsw.gov.au.

Resilience NSW may update these FAQs from time to time to include additional questions.

