

Mobile Coverage Project – Active Sharing Partnership

Grant Guidelines





Published by the Department of Regional NSW

**Mobile Coverage Project – Active Sharing Partnership
Grant Guidelines**

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The NSW Government has committed over \$400 million to the Regional Digital Connectivity program to ensure families and businesses across regional NSW have access to faster and more reliable digital networks.

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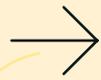
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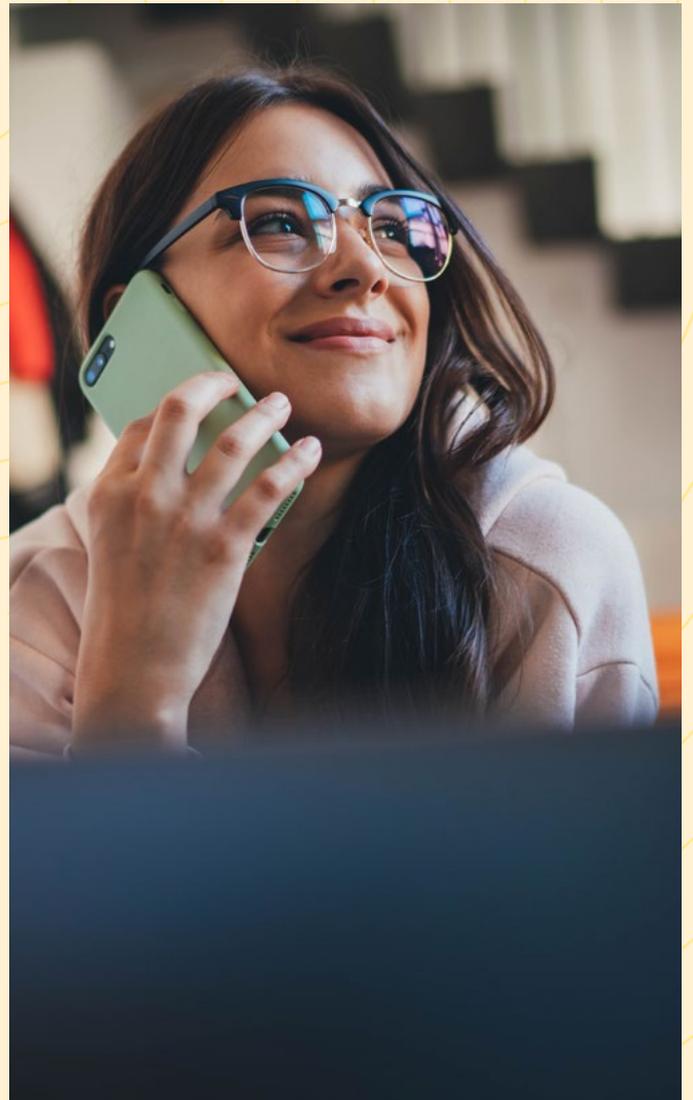
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01



Introduction



01 Introduction

In 2018, the NSW Government established the \$4.2 billion Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund (the Fund) to invest in transformational and economically productive infrastructure for regional NSW.

The Fund's investment is guided by the *20 Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW*. A key priority of the *20 Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW* is improving regional digital connectivity.

Over \$400 million from the Fund has been committed to the Regional Digital Connectivity program to ensure families and businesses across regional NSW have access to faster and more reliable digital networks. A key part of the Regional Digital Connectivity program is the Mobile Coverage project.

The Mobile Coverage project aims to significantly improve mobile coverage in regional NSW where people live, work and play through transformative investment in mobile phone infrastructure and emerging technologies. Stage 1 of the Mobile Coverage project commenced in 2022 with the Active Sharing Partnership - the focus of this grant opportunity.

About the Active Sharing Partnership Grant Opportunity

The \$30 million Active Sharing Partnership grant opportunity (the grant opportunity) seeks to establish collaborative partnerships between the telecommunications sector to design and deliver mobile coverage solutions that use active infrastructure sharing (active sharing mobile solutions) to deliver new and improved mobile coverage to regional NSW locations.

The objectives of the grant opportunity are to:

-  deliver new and improved mobile coverage to regional NSW locations where people live, work and play using active sharing mobile solutions
-  encourage competition in the regional telecommunications market to provide consumers with greater quality, affordability, and choice in their telecommunication provider
-  identify fit-for purpose commercial and delivery models for active sharing mobile solutions that can be implemented at scale in future government funding programs
-  demonstrate the suitability of different types of active sharing solutions in delivering coverage and connectivity outcomes for regional NSW.

Active infrastructure sharing is defined to include the sharing of electronic infrastructure of the network including the radio access network (consisting of antennas/transceivers, base station, backhaul networks and controllers) and core network (consisting of servers and core network functionalities).

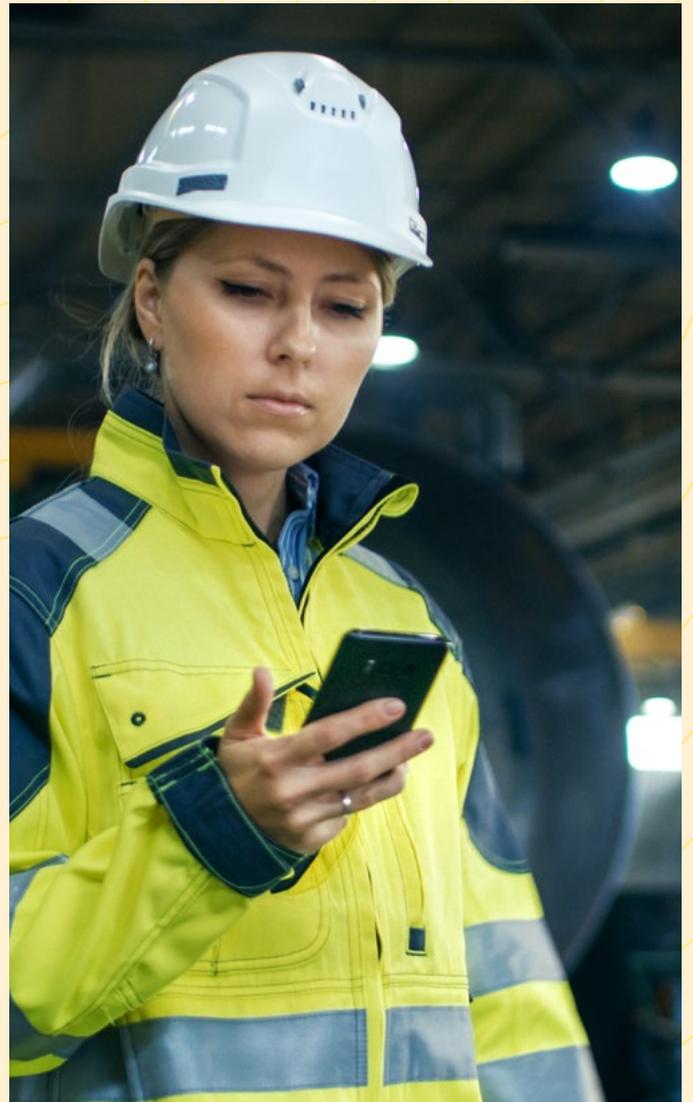
Widescale deployment of active sharing mobile solutions in regional NSW has the potential to accelerate digital connectivity and enhance competition by lowering capital intensive start-up costs and fixed operating costs.

The grant opportunity is being administered by the Department of Regional NSW (the department). A list of commonly used terms has been provided at Appendix C.

02



Grant value and period



02 Grant value and period

Available funding

A total of \$30 million (GST exclusive) is available under the grant opportunity for the construction and operation of active sharing mobile solutions in regional NSW. Funding will be available from the 2022-23 to 2025-26 financial years, unless otherwise agreed by the department.

Grant Period

Funded active sharing mobile solutions must be complete and ready for service (RFS) by December 2025, or any other date agreed by the department that is specified in the organisation's funding deed. Solutions will be considered RFS on the date the funded active sharing mobile solution is fully constructed and ready to provide a retail mobile service meeting the minimum requirements outlined in Appendix A.

Applicants must apply in project teams consisting of one access provider and one or more access seekers. Unless otherwise agreed by the department, the access provider will own the funded active sharing mobile solution and will be responsible for the solution's design, build, operation and maintenance. Access seekers must use the funded active sharing mobile solution to provide a retail and wholesale mobile service to a predictive coverage area, for the solution's minimum operational period.

The minimum operational period is the length of time a proposed active sharing mobile solution is required to provide the services for which it was funded. The minimum operational period is 10 years commencing from the date that the funded active sharing mobile solution is deemed RFS, unless otherwise agreed by the department.

Grant opportunity

\$30 million

construction and operation of active sharing mobile solutions

Available from

22/23 - 25/26

financial years



03



Eligibility criteria



Applications must meet the below eligibility criteria to be considered for grant funding.

Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria will not proceed to merit assessment. In limited circumstances, the eligibility criteria may be waived by the department.

Who is eligible to apply for a grant?



Applications must be submitted by project teams consisting of one access provider and one or more access seekers (the applicant).

Access providers must be either *carriers* (as defined under the *Telecommunications Act 1997* (Cth)) or *eligible companies* (as defined in Part 34B of the *Telecommunications Act 1997* (Cth)) (collectively, **access providers**).

Access seekers must be mobile network operators (MNOs).

A MNO is defined to be a company (other than an access provider) that:

- supplies a public mobile telecommunications service within the meaning of the *Telecommunications Act 1997* (Cth), and
- holds an apparatus or a spectrum licence (or both) for the supply of public mobile telecommunications services under the *Radiocommunications Act 1992* (Cth).

All access seekers and access providers must:

- have executed a services contract with the department to participate in Phase 1 of the Active Sharing Partnership
- be registered for GST
- hold or commit to obtaining public liability insurance of not less than \$20 million per occurrence or hold equivalent or better self-insurance to the satisfaction of the department, prior to executing a funding deed with the department.

Applications for funding must include written evidence, to the satisfaction of the department (for example, a letter of intent), from the applicant's access seeker(s) committing the access seeker, if approved for funding

(Evidence of Commitment):

- enter a binding agreement with the applicant's access provider to use the funded active sharing mobile solution(s) to provide retail mobile services meeting the minimum requirements outlined in Appendix A for the minimum operational period. (Note: it will be a condition precedent to commencement of the funding deed that such binding agreement has been entered into to the satisfaction of the department)
- offer the coverage provided by the funded active sharing mobile solution(s) to their wholesale network, including mobile virtual network operators (MVNOs) and mobile resellers, at a comparable equivalent or better prices to existing wholesale agreements, for the minimum operational period. (Note: the funding deed will include a requirement to provide proof to the satisfaction of the department that such comparable equivalent or better prices to existing wholesale agreements is being provided by the applicant during the minimum operational period).

If an applicant does not meet the above eligibility criteria or provide Evidence of Commitment to the satisfaction of the department, the department reserves the right to set the application aside from further consideration at the department's absolute discretion.

03 Eligibility Criteria

Eligible projects



Proposed active sharing mobile solutions must:

- use active infrastructure sharing to deliver mobile services meeting the minimum requirements outlined in Appendix A to each of the applicant's access seeker's networks
- provide new handheld coverage or overlapping handheld coverage to an eligible location
- be RFS by December 2025, unless otherwise agreed by the department
- not be in a location identified in the access provider (if applicable) or access seeker's current or 2022-23 to 2025-26 forward build network expansion or upgrade plans, including builds commenced and/or planned to commence in the next three (3) financial years at the date of contract award.

The department may consider extending the date a proposed active sharing mobile solution is required to be RFS if located on constrained land (for example, in a National Park), for emerging technologies (such as O-RAN) that require prolonged lab testing or as otherwise approved by the department.

If a proposed solution does not meet the above eligibility requirements, the department reserves the right to set the application aside from further consideration at the department's absolute discretion.

Eligible locations



Eligible locations are areas of regional NSW, where:

- there is no existing handheld coverage provided by any MNO, or
- existing handheld coverage is provided by only one MNO.

Existing handheld coverage is coverage able to be obtained with a handheld mobile device:

- that is currently available within the current mobile coverage area of at least one MNO, in accordance with the publicly available coverage maps from all MNOs or handheld 4G and 5G coverage maps submitted by organisations during the registration process
- that will be provided by any base station funded under any Australian Government, state or territory connectivity program including the Mobile Black Spot Program or Regional Connectivity Program.

The department will release a list of preferred locations (the preferred list) to all registered organisations following the grant opportunity opening for applications, subject to execution of a Confidentiality Deed Poll. All locations and corridors identified in the preferred list will be considered eligible locations regardless of their level of existing handheld coverage.

Applications may consider locations outside of the preferred list provided they meet the grant opportunity's objectives and eligibility criteria set out in these guidelines.

Investing in better mobile coverage for regional communities



03 Eligibility Criteria

Eligible project expenditure



Grant funding is available for the following eligible project expenditure:

- in respect of access providers, direct incremental costs related to the delivery of the proposed active sharing mobile solution and its ongoing operating costs (**capital infrastructure costs**), including:
 - the estimated asset capital costs of building or installing the proposed active sharing mobile solution, including all materials and equipment, labour and services and upfront capital costs related to the installation and deployment of backhaul
 - for proposed solutions located in natural disaster-prone areas, additional resilience measures including auxiliary backup power above the minimum power specification, redundant backhaul and other functionality that allows for demonstrated improvements to the reliability of services in an emergency
- in respect of access seekers, direct incremental costs associated with the establishment of the active sharing network, where not already provided by the access seeker including funding for changes/upgrades to access providers' support systems e.g., operating and billing support systems (**integration costs**)
- in respect of access seekers, any charges paid by access seekers to an access provider to access the funded active sharing mobile solution to provide a retail mobile service meeting the minimum requirements outlined in Appendix A for the minimum operational period (**access charges**).

Access seekers may request funding for backhaul, however this may only be requested once and must not be included in an access seeker's access costs if the access seeker is being reimbursed for the backhaul by the access provider.

Ineligible projects and project costs



The following projects and project costs are ineligible:

- projects that do not meet the eligibility criteria set out in these guidelines
- projects that have commenced or are planned to commence regardless of financial support from government, as evidenced by applicants' forward build network expansion or upgrade plans for 2022-23 to 2025-26
- projects not directly resulting in new shared infrastructure investment, for example market development, strategy development, and feasibility studies with no follow up investment component
- projects or project components already funded by other Australian Government, state or territory programs (e.g., the Commonwealth Mobile Black Spot Program or Regional Connectivity Program)
- consumer level products and equipment (for example handsets and mobile boosters), and other non-infrastructure telecommunication products purchased for consumption by a limited number of users
- internal costs associated with providing a retail mobile service on the active sharing mobile solution including funding for customer support, market and strategy development and feasibility studies
- costs or expenses incurred in connection with an application, including costs associated with the preparation, negotiation, and execution of the funding deed and other documents
- project expenses incurred prior to executing a funding deed with the department.

04



Grant amounts and co-contribution requirements



04 Grant amounts and co-contribution requirements

Grant amounts

Unless otherwise agreed by the department:

- there is no maximum grant amount for capital infrastructure cost associated with building or installing proposed active sharing mobile solutions
- access charges payable to an access provider in respect of the proposed active sharing mobile solutions should be capped and decrease on a sliding scale for the minimum operational period as shown in Table 1
- integration costs payable in respect of an access seeker's core networks are capped at \$1 million per access seeker per active sharing type. Access seekers are unable to claim multiple integration costs for active sharing solutions that use the same active sharing type.

Table 1: Access charges (expected approach)

Charge type	Access charges
Years 0 - 3	100 percent subsidy
Years 4 - 6	75 percent subsidy
Years 7 - 8	50 percent subsidy
Years 9 - 10	25 percent subsidy

Eligible costs must be incurred after the Funding Deed is executed with the Department and before the completion date and be costs specific to the project.

Applicant co-contribution

Successful applicants will be required to make substantial cash co-contributions towards eligible project expenditure.

Applicants' cash contributions will be expected to increase based on the relative commercial viability of their proposed active sharing mobile solution. In determining a proposed solution's commercial viability, the department will consider the location's level of existing coverage; proximity to power, backhaul and access roads; population density; traffic volumes and land use. Active sharing mobile solutions determined to be of low commercial viability may attract higher levels of grant funding.

Applicants' co-contributions may be obtained from third parties. Third party co-contributions may include cash or in-kind co-contributions. The total of all third-party co-contributions must not be equal to or greater than 50 percent of the applicant's total cash co-contribution. Applicants cannot use funding from other Australian Government, state or territory programs to fund their co-contribution.

The value of any cash and/or in-kind contributions will inform the assessment against the assessment criteria.

Merit criteria

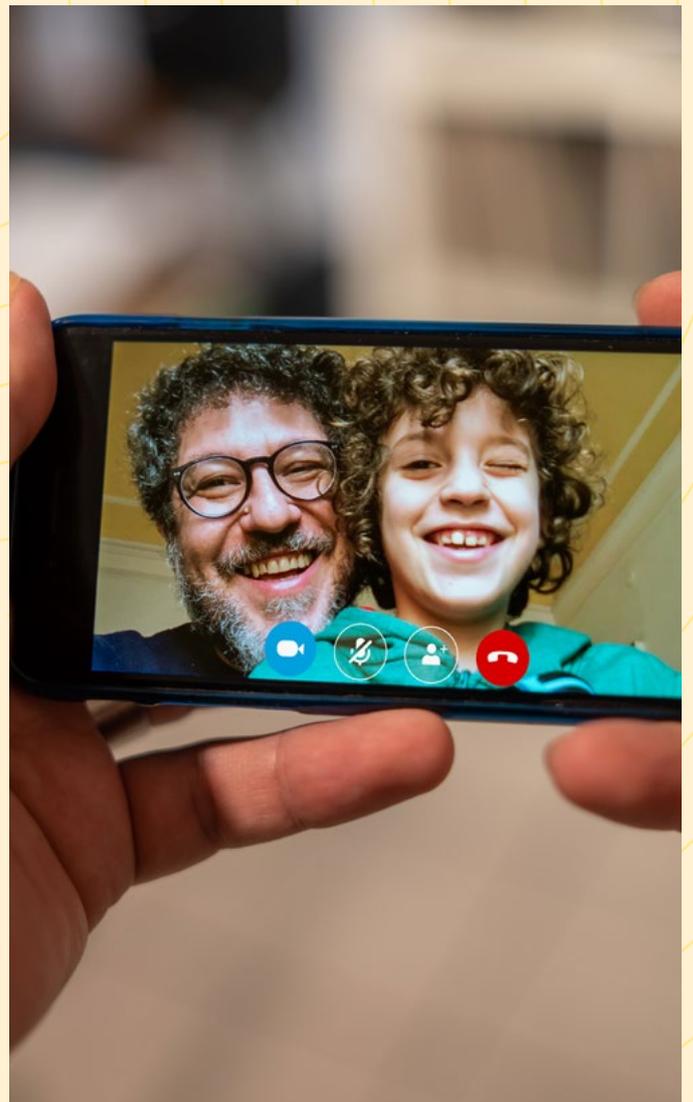
-  **Criterion 1** Coverage benefit
-  **Criterion 2** Merit of the proposed solution
-  **Criterion 3** Social and economic outcomes
-  **Criterion 4** Deliverability
-  **Criterion 5** Alignment to government priorities
-  **Criterion 6** Affordability



05



Assessment criteria



05 Assessment criteria

Proposed active sharing mobile solutions will be assessed against the following assessment criteria. The amount of detail and supporting evidence provided in your application should be relative to the project's size and complexity, and the grant amount requested.

Cluster solutions comprising of two or more (to a maximum of fifteen) active sharing mobile solutions providing coverage to similar geographic locations will be considered as a whole.

Merit criteria



Criterion 1 – Coverage benefit

For the purpose of this criterion, proposed active sharing mobile solutions will be ranked in descending order according to the amount in square kilometres of new handheld coverage and overlapping handheld coverage they are predicted to provide, applying the coverage benefit calculation provided in Example 1.

For the purpose of the coverage benefit calculation:

- new handheld coverage refers to the size in square kilometres of regional NSW which will receive new handheld coverage from the proposed active sharing mobile solution
- overlapping handheld coverage refers to the size in square kilometres of regional NSW which will receive overlapping handheld coverage from the proposed active sharing mobile solution.

New handheld coverage is defined to be coverage provided to by a proposed active sharing solution able to be obtained with a handheld mobile device in an area that does not currently receive existing handheld coverage from any MNO.

Overlapping handheld coverage is defined to be coverage provided by a proposed active sharing mobile solution able to be obtained with a handheld mobile device that is new handheld coverage for a participant MNO but overlaps existing handheld coverage from one other MNO. Overlapping handheld coverage will be given half the weighting of new handheld coverage for the purpose of the coverage benefit calculation.

The following coverage outcomes will be excluded from scoring:

- handheld coverage that overlaps with the access seeker's existing handheld coverage where the solution has the confirmed involvement of only one MNO
- handheld coverage that overlaps with existing handheld coverage from two (2) or more MNOs
- new handheld coverage or overlapping handheld coverage provided to an ineligible location, including locations outside of regional NSW.

A proposed active sharing mobile solution's level of new handheld coverage and/or overlapping handheld coverage will be measured by comparing the proposed solution's predicted handheld coverage (predictive coverage zone) against existing handheld 4G and 5G coverage maps submitted by organisations during the registration process. The Department may, at its absolute discretion, accept alternate evidence submitted by applicants verifying a location's level of existing handheld coverage (or lack thereof) including drive testing results.

05 Assessment criteria

Example 1:

Coverage benefit calculation- application of assessment criteria 1

$$\text{Coverage benefit (km}^2\text{)} = \frac{\text{new handheld coverage (km}^2\text{)} + \text{overlapping handheld coverage (km}^2\text{)}}{2}$$

Application of the coverage benefit calculation

A proposed active sharing mobile solution has confirmed participation of three (3) MNOs:

- **A:** the proposed active sharing mobile solution provides 10km² of new handheld coverage for the applicant's three (3) MNOs* that does not overlap with existing handheld coverage
- **B:** the proposed active sharing mobile solution provides 20km² of new handheld coverage that overlaps with the existing handheld coverage of one of the participant MNO's networks but with no other MNOs networks
- **C:** the proposed active sharing mobile solution provides 5km² of coverage that overlaps with each participant MNOs' networks (automatically scored zero).
- **D:** the proposed active sharing mobile solution provides 5km² of coverage to an area outside of regional NSW (automatically scored zero).

The assessed coverage of the proposed active sharing mobile solution is calculated as follows:

$$A + \frac{B}{2} + C + D = \text{coverage benefit}$$

$$10\text{km}^2 + \frac{20\text{km}^2}{2} + 0 + 0 = 20\text{km}^2$$

* Coverage provided by a proposed active sharing mobile solution will only be counted once, regardless of the number of MNOs that will provide the proposed coverage from the solution.



Criterion 2 – Merit of the proposed solution

The merit of the proposed active sharing mobile solution will be assessed against the following factors:

- the suitability of the technical, operational and other characteristics of the proposed active sharing mobile solution based on its proposed location, including consideration of the solution's service and spectrum offerings
- the extent to which the proposed active sharing mobile solution will, or has the potential to, be implemented at scale and lower cost under future funding rounds
- the extent to which the proposed active sharing mobile solution will, or has the potential to, facilitate retail competition including:
 - the number of MNOs that have committed to use the proposed active sharing mobile solution to provide a retail mobile service meeting the minimum requirements outlined in Appendix A for the minimum operational period at the time of application submission (based on the Evidence of Commitment provided to the department)
 - the number of MNOs that have committed to offer the service provided by the proposed active sharing mobile solution to their wholesale network, including mobile virtual network operators (MVNOs) and mobile resellers, at a comparable equivalent or better prices to existing wholesale agreements, for the minimum operational period at the time of application submission (based on the Evidence of Commitment provided to the department).

Applications with a commitment from three (3) or more access seekers to provide a retail and wholesale mobile service from the proposed active sharing mobile solution will be prioritised by the department.

→ 3



Criterion 3 – Social and economic outcomes

The extent to which the proposed active sharing mobile solution will, or has the potential to, deliver improved social and economic outcomes for regional NSW will be assessed against the following factors:

- **Safety** – improving public safety within a defined area as determined by:
 - the predictive coverage zone’s propensity to natural disaster based on the number of natural disaster declarations issued for the LGA in the prior five (5) financial years
 - the length (in kilometres) of roads predicted to fall within the predicted coverage zone, including consideration of the road’s classification and accident frequency
- **Liveability** – improving regional amenity, community connections and inclusion through greater access to digital services and experiences (e.g., health, education, banking, retail etc) as determined by:
 - the number of premises that fall within the proposed solution’s predictive coverage zone
- **Productivity** – improving the productivity of businesses and organisations within a defined area as determined by:
 - the number of businesses, tourism and government assets (e.g., schools, hospitals, and police stations etc.) within the proposed solution’s predictive coverage zone
- **Disadvantage** – addressing disadvantage within a community as determined by:
 - the LGA’s relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage (based on the Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage)
 - the LGA’s digital inclusion score (based on the Australian Digital Inclusion Index).

The relative importance of each of the above factors will vary according to whether the proposed active sharing mobile solution is providing targeted coverage to a small population or transport corridor (road and rail).

→ 4



Criterion 4 – Deliverability

The applicant’s capability and capacity to design and deliver the proposed active sharing mobile solution will be assessed against the following factors:

- the ability for the applicant to access, or secure future access to, any necessary infrastructure, power or backhaul; and how the applicant will maintain the infrastructure and benefits of the project during the minimum operational period
- demonstrated capability and capacity to deliver the project through past performance in delivering similar projects (for example, detailing managerial capability to carry out the project)
- suitability of the staff or arrangements to deliver the project
- readiness to commence the project, obtain relevant approvals, integrate the network(s) and commence construction of the proposed active sharing solution within 12 months of contract award
- suitability of the supporting documentation for example project plan, feasibility plan, budget, technical plans and/or cost estimates.

05 Assessment criteria

→ 5



Criterion 5 – Alignment to government priorities

The extent to which the proposed active sharing mobile solution will contribute to relevant NSW Government priorities including:

- the alignment of the proposed active sharing mobile solution's predictive coverage with the Department's list of preferred locations
- sustainable procurement outcomes during the construction and operational phases including the ability to support small and medium sized enterprises, Aboriginal businesses, regional businesses, and employment of preferred groups including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, young people and people with a disability.

→ 6



Criterion 6 – Affordability

- Alignment of the proposed active sharing mobile solutions' capital infrastructure costs and access charges against industry cost estimates.
- The share of the co-contribution from the applicant and other third-parties (for example local governments) as a percentage of the total project cost. A higher level of contribution from other sources, comparative to the cost of the proposed active sharing mobile solution, will drive a higher score in the assessment process for this criterion.

Non-weighted evaluation considerations

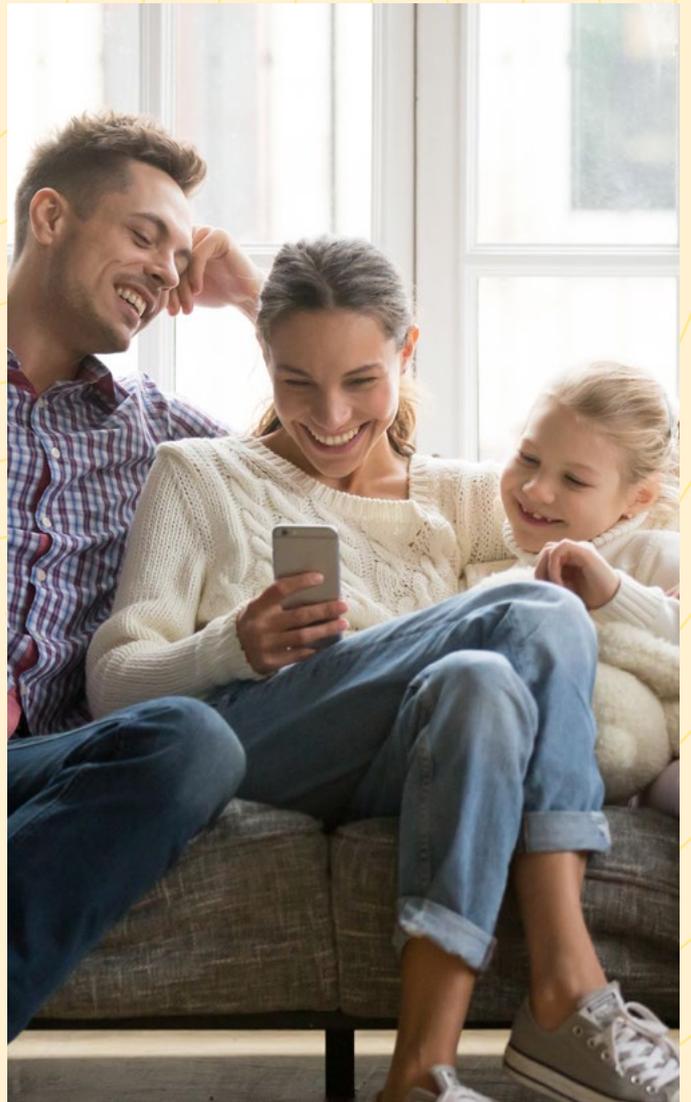
The following factors will also be considered when determining the suitability of the proposed active sharing mobile solution for funding:

- the net benefit per dollar of government grant as determined by a cost-benefit analysis
- the financial strength of the applicant as determined by a due diligence assessment of the applicant's financial statements (or other evidence of financial viability if statements are not available)
- the results of the grant opportunity's risk assessment as outlined in the grant selection process (see pages 25–27)
- the level of change required to the template funding deed, with fewer, less substantive, proposed changes being more favourable
- work already undertaken by access providers and or access seekers to integrate their networks.

06



Application and assessment process



06 Application and assessment process

Key dates and process summary

Key dates for the grant opportunity are outlined below. Updates to the key dates will be published on the

→ [NSW Government grants and funding finder](#)



Grant opportunity opens for applications

Organisation registration and document submission

Wednesday 28 September 2022

28 September - 12 October 2022

Co-development discussion period

12 October - 14 November 2022



Grant closes for applications

Grant selection process

Monday 14 November 2022, 17:00PM (AEDST)

15 November - 16 December 2022

Notification of application outcome

from 19 December 2022

Establishment of funding deeds

from January 2023

Applications or registrations received after the grant closing date and time will be deemed to be a late application. The department reserves the right to accept a late application where it is satisfied that its acceptance will not compromise the integrity and competitiveness of the process.

Organisation registration and document submission

Organisations must register their interest to participate in the grant opportunity on the SmartyGrants portal by 12 October 2022. Extensions to the registration date will only be provided on exception and at the department's absolute discretion.

In registering their interest, organisations must provide the following information:

- organisation name and ABN
- the organisation's contact for prospective applications
- the organisation's active sharing technology preference(s) (for example, MORAN, MOCN, domestic roaming)

- for MNOs, the organisation's most recent handheld 4G and 5G coverage maps provided under the ACCC's *Audit of Telecommunications Infrastructure Assets - Record Keeping Rules (handheld 4G and 5G coverage maps)*, incorporating:
 - updates to the organisation's existing handheld coverage not accounted for in those maps, current at the date the grant opportunity opens for applications
 - predicted and planned handheld mobile coverage for all base stations funded by Australian Government, state and territory connectivity programs not yet accounted for on publicly available coverage, regardless of their stage of construction or upgrade.Any updates to the organisation's handheld 4G and 5G coverage maps must be modelled against the RSRP coverage modelling requirements outlined in Appendix A.
- confirmation of acceptance of the Department releasing the above information to other registered organisations to aid project team formation.

06 Application and assessment process

Organisations must provide the following attachments to their registration which will not be distributed to other registered organisations:

- a signed Confidentiality Deed Poll, in the form provided by the Department
- for MNOs, an additional geospatial layer outlining predicted and planned handheld mobile coverage for all base stations in the organisation's forward build network expansion or upgrade plans from 2022-23 to 2025-26 modelled against the RSRP coverage modelling requirements outlined in Appendix A
- a map of the organisation's existing or planned infrastructure assets that could be leveraged/co-located on to deliver the proposed active sharing mobile solution, including but not limited to the land, site, fibre, and microwave backhaul assets.

Geo-spatial information such as maps must be provided in either MapInfo TAB, ESRI Shape or GML format.

The list of preferred locations will not be released to a registered organisation until the organisation has submitted a satisfactory Confidentiality Deed Poll to the Department, in the form provided by the Department.

The Department will release the name of registered organisations, their relevant contacts and active sharing preferences to all other registered organisations in early October 2022.

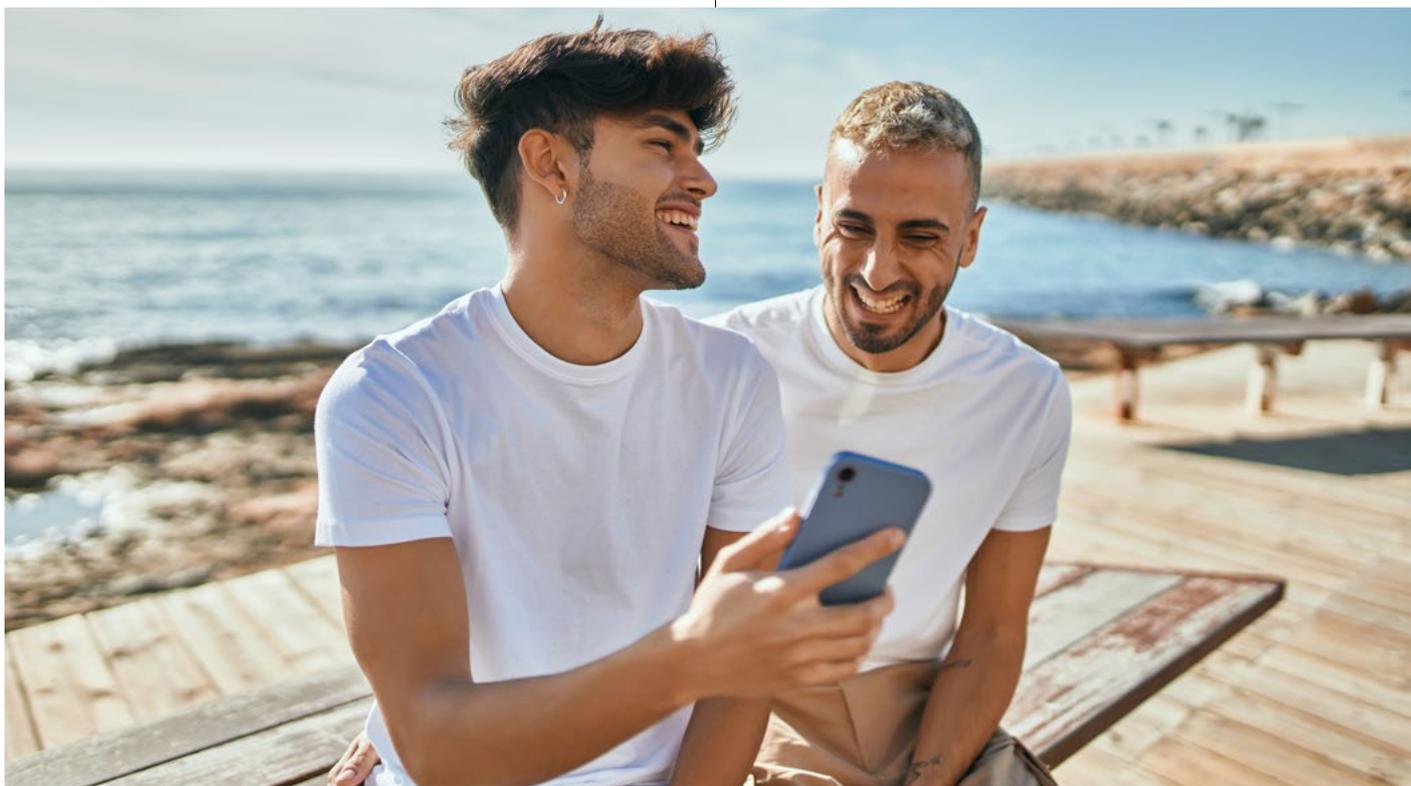
Co-development discussion period

Registered organisations are encouraged to discuss and plan co-development and co-funding opportunities with interested registered organisations prior to submitting a final application for funding by 14 November 2022.

Prior to submitting an application, registered organisations must form project teams consisting of one access provider and one or more access seekers. In forming project teams, registered organisations should consider commonality in location preferences and active sharing types.

Registered organisations may participate in one or more project teams in differing capacities (for example as an access seeker or access provider, or as an access seeker in multiple project teams). Project team composition may differ from the project teams proposed in Phase 1 of the Active Sharing Partnership.

Unless otherwise nominated, the access provider will be considered the applicant lead and will be responsible for submitting the project team's final application and responding to the department's requests for clarification.



Application submission

Applications must be submitted in the template provided by the department via the SmartyGrants Portal by the closing date and time. Where an application has not been submitted using this template and format, the department reserves the right to deem the application as non-conforming and set it aside from further consideration at its absolute discretion.

All applications must include:

- details of each of the applicant's registered organisations and their respective roles (e.g., as the access provider or access seeker)
- the completed Data Sheet in the template provided by the department. The Data Sheet must include the following information:
 - the proposed active sharing mobile solution's approximate latitudes and longitudes, LGA and state government electorate
 - the proposed active sharing mobile solution's predictive coverage zone in square kilometres, modelled off the requirements outlined in Appendix A
 - the location's coverage characteristics e.g., whether the location falls within existing handheld coverage or overlapping handheld coverage
 - the types, structure, size and equipment of base stations and RAN technology being proposed e.g., tower type and height, backhaul solution, small/ macro cells, O-RAN
 - the proposed active sharing mobile solution's active sharing type(s) and service offerings
 - the number of MNOs confirmed to provide a retail and wholesale mobile service from the proposed active sharing mobile solution at the time of application
 - whether the proposed active sharing mobile solution forms part of a cluster solution and is dependent on the construction of one or more other proposed solution(s), explaining all specific dependencies
 - estimates of the proposed active sharing mobile solution's capital infrastructure costs, integration costs and access charges and associated contingencies
 - the value of the applicant's (access seeker and access provider) cash co-contribution (GST exclusive) toward the mobile solution's capital infrastructure costs, integration costs and access charges
 - the value of third-party cash or in kind or cash contributions (GST exclusive)
 - the amount of grant funding requested towards the proposed active sharing mobile solution's estimated capital infrastructure cost, integration costs and access charges
 - the extent to which the proposed active sharing mobile solution meets the assessment criteria, including data relating to the proposed active sharing mobile solution's social and economic outcomes.
- a high-level overview of the proposed solution, its technology and backhaul requirements, and any additional resiliency measures applied
- for additional service offerings above the minimum viable product an explanation of local need and commercial viability (including support from end users, additional cost of solutions)
- a supporting narrative outlining how the proposed solution will demonstrate learnings for the telecommunications industry and government for future investments
- a supporting narrative outlining how the proposed solution will be able to be implemented at scale in future government programs and any anticipated reductions in costs due to the integration and other related activities proposed as part of an application
- consolidated improved handheld coverage maps identifying each proposed active sharing mobile solution's predicted coverage zone based on the minimum requirements outlined in Appendix A layered against the applicant's MNOs existing handheld 4G and 5G coverage maps submitted during registration
- if applicable, provide alternative coverage modelling assumptions and/or other evidence to verify the level of existing handheld coverage within the proposed area
- evidence of the applicant's (access seeker and access provider) experience delivering projects of similar scope and scale, or other evidence of its capability and capacity to deliver the project
- evidence of the project's readiness including a forecast of key project activities and their associated timeframes
- a cash flow budget and an explanation for the underlying assumptions for the project's lifecycle
- any other information identified by the department in the approved application and Data Sheet templates.

06 Application and assessment process

From each of the applicant's access providers and access seekers:

- audited financial statements (trading, profit and loss statements and balance sheets) for three (3) continuous years starting from the latest available year, or other evidence of financial viability if audited financial statements are not available
- evidence of public liability insurance of not less than \$20 million per occurrence or equivalent or better self-insurance to the satisfaction of the department
- compliance with the relevant draft Funding Deed's terms and conditions at the time of applying for funding
- if requesting funding above the grant opportunity's maximum funding amounts, the rationale for the request
- a signed Applicant Declaration in the template provided by the department.

From each of the applicant's access seekers:

- Evidence of Commitment to the satisfaction of the Department (for example, a letter of intent) committing the access seeker to, if approved for funding:
 - enter a binding agreement with the access provider to use the proposed active sharing mobile solution to provide a retail mobile service meeting the minimum requirements outlined in Appendix A to the predicted coverage zone for the minimum operational period, and
 - offer the coverage provided by the proposed active sharing mobile solution to their wholesale network, including MVNOs and mobile resellers, at a comparable equivalent or better price to existing wholesale agreements for the minimum operational period.

All electronic files should be provided in an appropriate Microsoft compatible format; and Geo-spatial information such as maps must be provided in either MapInfo TAB, ESRI Shape or GML format.

This is a competitive process. The inclusion of insufficient evidence or detail in an application may impact the assessment against the assessment criteria.

Where the above information has not been provided, the department reserves the right to consider the application or set it aside from further consideration at the department's absolute discretion. The department will be under no obligation to accept any late information not included with an applicant's original application.

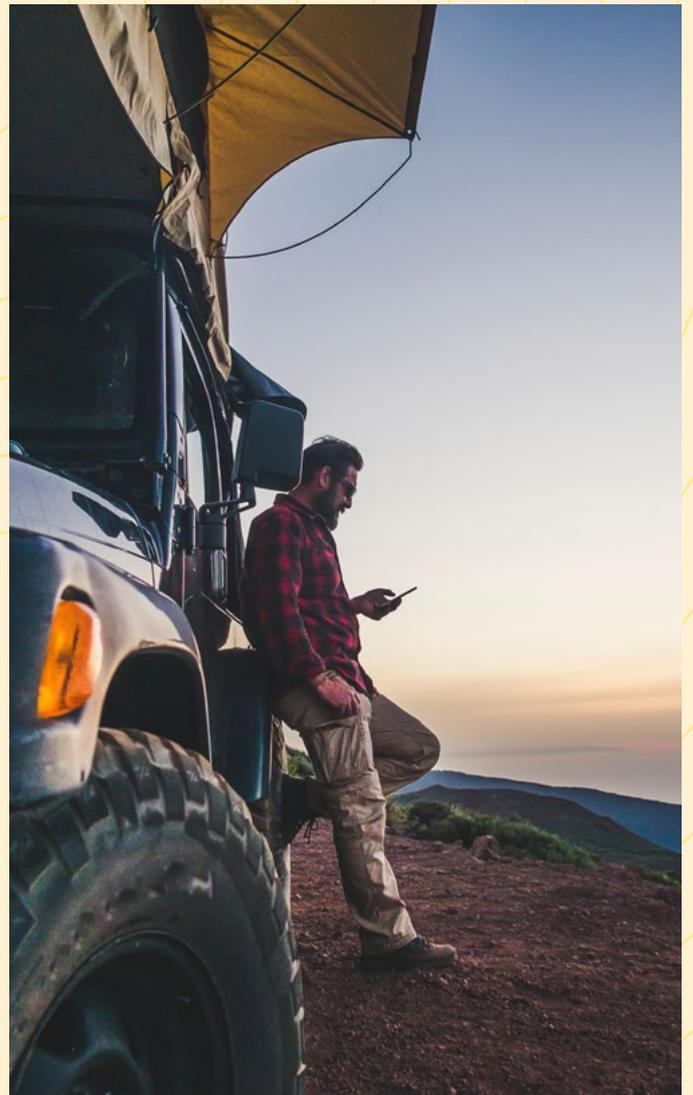
Changes to Applications

Applicants are responsible for ensuring their application is complete and accurate. If an applicant identifies an error in their application after submission, the applicant lead should contact the regional digital connectivity team immediately by emailing mcp.grants@regional.nsw.gov.au. If the error is identified after the grant opportunity has closed for application, the Department will be under no obligation to allow changes to the application.

07



The grant selection process



07 The grant selection process

Risk assessment

A risk assessment will be conducted in relation to the suitability of each applicant. The risk assessment will include, but is not limited to:

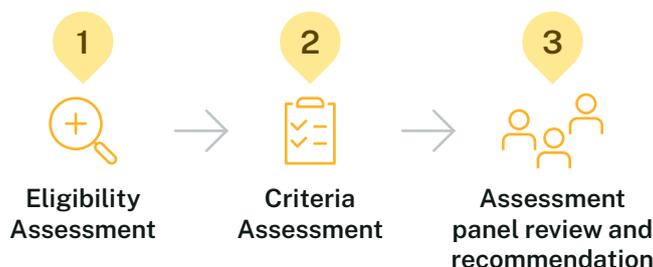
- applicant bona fides check (status, corporate structure, ownership, directors' review)
- background and probity searches (ACCC, banned and disqualified registers, bankruptcy, adverse media, court documents)
- regulatory compliance and corporate conduct checks
- history of performance delivering previously funded projects under Australian Government, state or territory government connectivity programs within timeframes and budget, if applicable.

The department may engage contractors, consultants, or specialist advisors to assist with the risk assessment and may seek advice from other government agencies during this process. Further information may be sought by the department from access providers and access seekers at any time to support the risk assessment.

The result of the risk assessment will inform the department's assessment of the application against the assessment criteria. Where an applicant has been identified as a greater than acceptable risk as a result of this risk assessment, the department may set the application aside from further consideration at its absolute discretion.

Assessment process

The department will coordinate the assessment process. Assessment of the applications will be completed in three steps:



1. Eligibility Assessment

The department will assess each application's compliance against the eligibility criteria set out in these guidelines. If one or more of the applicant's access seekers or access provider do not meet the eligibility criteria, the ineligible access seekers or access provider may be removed from the assessment process and the applicant lead notified. Proposed solutions that do not meet the grant eligibility criteria may also be excluded from assessment. Final eligibility determinations will be made at the discretion of the Assessment Panel, with the advice from the department.



2. Criteria Assessment

The department will assess all projects deemed eligible against the assessment criteria outlined in these guidelines. During the assessment, the department may ask applicants to provide additional information to assist the assessment process. Advice may also be sought from other government agencies, or subject matter experts. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process.



3. Assessment panel review and recommendation

An Assessment Panel will review the outcomes of the eligibility and criteria assessments and consider the merits of each application against the criteria to determine if the proposed application should be considered for funding.

The Assessment Panel will include representation from the department's Regional Digital Connectivity and Regional Development and Programs Group, the NSW Telco Authority and independent technical and/or commercial expert(s). An independent probity advisor will be present at all Assessment Panel meetings.

07 The grant selection process

Final eligibility and suitability determinations will be made at the discretion of the Assessment Panel, with advice and recommendations from the department. The Assessment Panel may request advice from other industry experts, internal or external to the NSW Government, to aid assessment.

In addition to the guideline's assessment criteria, the Assessment Panel may consider the following in assessing the suitability of an application:

- the amount of funding available
- geographical spread of projects across regional NSW
- distribution of project across all active sharing types (MOCN, MORAN, domestic roaming)
- suitability of projects for other government funding opportunities
- applications that have requested consideration for extenuating circumstances (e.g., less than the minimum required co-contribution, late submissions etc) and have provided supporting evidence for being unable to meet a threshold requirement
- whether further information is required to make an informed decision and delay the status of an application

The assessment panel may, at its absolute discretion, recommend:

- funding an application in full
- part-funding an application where there is insufficient funding available or where only a component of the application is considered suitable for funding
- funding applications that do not have the required level of cash co-contribution, subject to consideration by the Department of any extenuating circumstances outlined by the applicant
- providing a lesser funding amount than what was requested by the applicant
- not funding an application.

Approval

The assessment panel's advice and recommendations will be provided to the relevant delegate in the department for consideration and approval.

The relevant delegate will review the availability of grant funds and the assessment panel's recommendations before deciding which (if any) grants to approve. The relevant delegate may take other factors into account that may make an application ineligible for funding, including issues that could cause reputational or other risks to the NSW Government.

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

- the approval of the grant
- the grant funding amount to be awarded
- the terms and conditions of the grant.

There is no appeal mechanism for decisions to approve or not approve a grant.

Notification of funding outcomes

Applicants will be advised in writing of the outcome of their application.

Successful applicants will be notified confidentially from December 2022 or as soon as possible after an application is approved, at the department's absolute discretion. A grant may be subject to the successful applicant accepting specific terms and conditions outlined in their letter of offer. Successful applicants will be requested to keep the grant confidential for a specified period if an announcement may be made by the NSW Government.

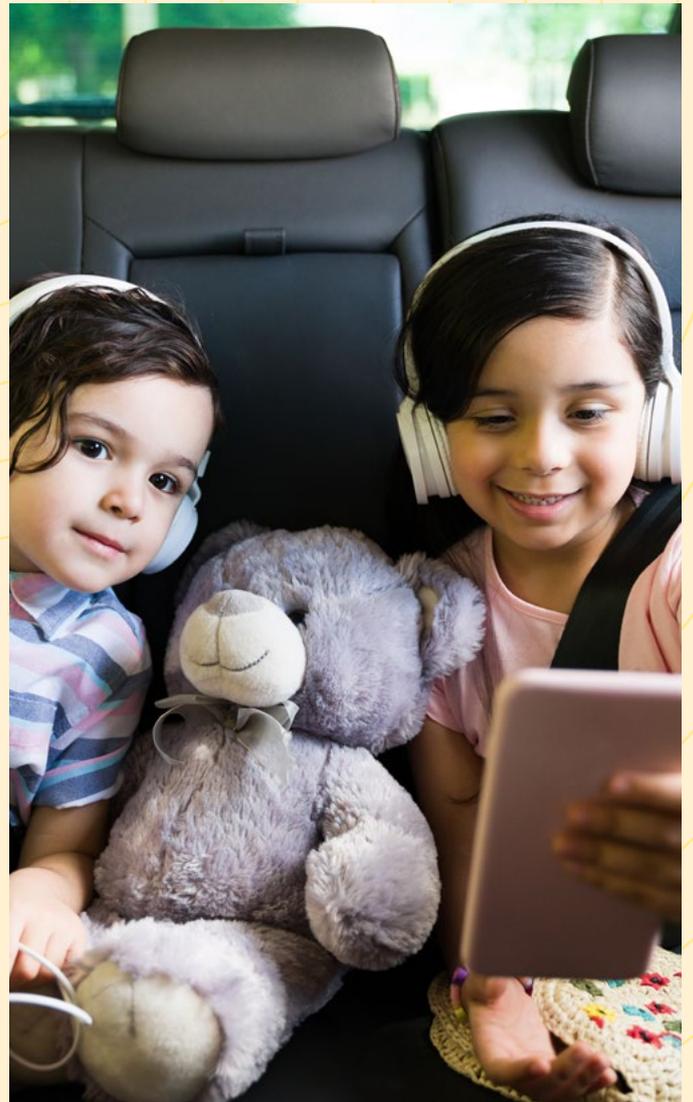
Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application and will be offered a feedback information session within 20 business days of being advised of the outcome.

Public announcements regarding funding outcomes will not be made until all applicants have been advised of application outcomes.

08



Successful applications



08 Successful applications

Funding Deed

The NSW Government will execute individual funding deeds with each successful applicant's access provider and access seekers (grantees). Each funding deed will have contractual force and will, amongst others, contain the following details:

- the maximum grant amount to be paid to the grantee
- the cash or in-kind contribution required of the grantee
- the grantee obligations in respect of the proposed mobile coverage solution, including its roll-out, coverage zone, access and service terms
- the grantee's monitoring and acquittal requirements.

The grant of the licence to the department set out in Appendix B shall be a term of any funding deed between an access provider and the department.

The terms and conditions of each Funding Deed will vary based on whether the grantee is an access seeker or access provider. Please refer to the Funding Deed templates on the NSW Government grants and funding finder for further information.

Successful applicants will have 30 business days from the date of a written letter of offer to execute their funding deed with the NSW Government, unless otherwise agreed. A funding deed will not be considered executed until both parties' appropriate officers have signed the funding deed. If the Grantee fails to provide required information to enter the funding deed within this timeframe, the offer of funding may be withdrawn by the department.

The NSW Government makes no binding funding commitment to an applicant unless and until both parties sign a funding deed and subject to compliance by the applicant with the terms of such Funding Deed.

How the grant will be paid

Grants will be paid based in instalments on the satisfactory completion of activities and as set out in the Funding Deed. Timing and requirements will vary at NSW Government's discretion, depending on the scope and risk of the project.

The maximum amount payable by the department will be limited to the agreed total funding amount stated in the funding deed. The department is not required to provide any additional money to meet additional costs associated with a funded active sharing mobile solution's construction or operation in excess of the funding deed's total funding amount. Any costs incurred in excess of the grant must be paid by the grantee.

All organisations will have Goods and Services Tax (GST) added to their grant payment and be required to submit invoices to the Department for payment of instalments.

Grants may be assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. Organisations should seek independent professional advice in respect of this point and on their taxation obligations.

Reporting requirements

Grantees will be required to provide a copy of all relevant insurances, the Evidence of Commitment and any other supporting documentation relevant to the project as set out in these guidelines, the Funding Deed or as reasonably requested by the Department.

Successful applicants will be required to submit regular progress reports, asset completion/go live reports, operational reports and reconciliation statements to the NSW Government. Reporting requirements for access providers and access seekers are outlined in each organisation's respective Funding Deed templates.

Examples of measures to be included in the progress and asset completion reports are as follows:

- square kilometres of new handheld coverage and/or overlapping handheld coverage provided by the funded solution
- kilometres of road covered by new handheld coverage and/or overlapping handheld coverage provided by the funded solution
- number of premises provided new or overlapping handheld coverage covered by the funded solution.

Successful applicants will be required to provide and maintain a joint stakeholder engagement plan with each of the applicant's access seekers and access providers. Only one stakeholder engagement plan is required per project team.

Successful access seekers and access providers who are MNOs will be required to maintain a publicly available online database providing information regarding the status and progress of their proposed mobile coverage solutions, any NSW Government funding amount and details of other partner access seekers.

Successful applicants that form part of the same project team may develop and submit the same project reports to the department to streamline the review and approval process, in accordance with the terms of the applicant's funding deed.

08 Successful applications

The department's responsibilities

The department will:

- meet the terms and conditions set out in the Funding Deed
- provide timely administration of the grant in accordance with the department's usual processes
- evaluate the grantee's performance in accordance with the Funding Deed.

The department will monitor the progress of the grantee's project by assessing reports the grantee submits and may conduct site visits to confirm details of the reports if necessary. Occasionally, the department may need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments. The department may also inspect the records the grantee is required to keep under the Funding Deed.

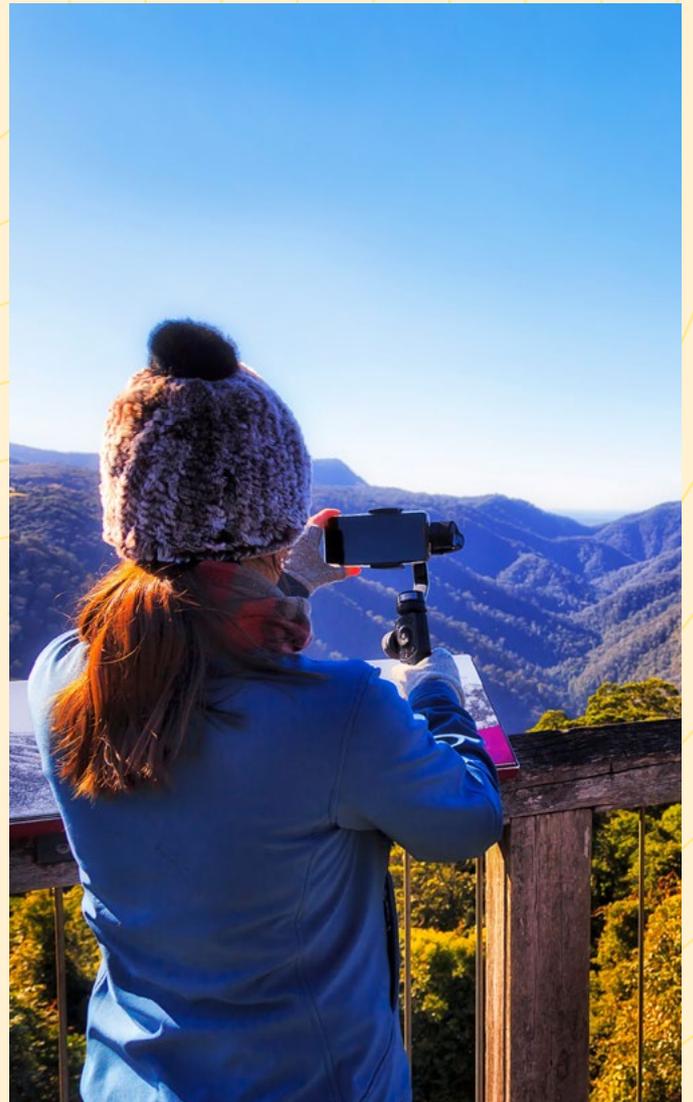
Evaluation

The department may conduct an evaluation at any time to assess the appropriateness, efficiency, effectiveness and/or net social benefits of the grant opportunity and project. Successful applicants will be required to participate in a program evaluation. The department may use information from applications and reports, and/or interview successful applicants or request additional information.

09



Announcements
and acknowledgement
of funding



09 Announcements and acknowledgement of funding

Grant announcement

Funding decisions and assessment outcomes must be kept confidential until announced by the NSW Government.

The department will list the details of successful grant applicants on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder within 45 days of the Funding Deed taking effect, unless contrary to legal or statutory requirements, or the terms of the Funding Deed.

Media

All media enquiries or public announcements relating to the grant opportunity will be coordinated and managed by the department's media team.

Grantees must:

- seek and obtain the department's approval before making any public statements, or contacting the media in relation to the grant
- provide the department with at least 25 business days' notice of any proposed media event
- provide any proposed media or public statement to the department for approval prior to its release as well as making any changes or amendments to the form, content or manner reasonably requested by the Department
- comply with any branding guidelines provided by the department.

Acknowledgement of funding

All recipients of NSW Government funding must acknowledge the government's funding contribution in accordance with the

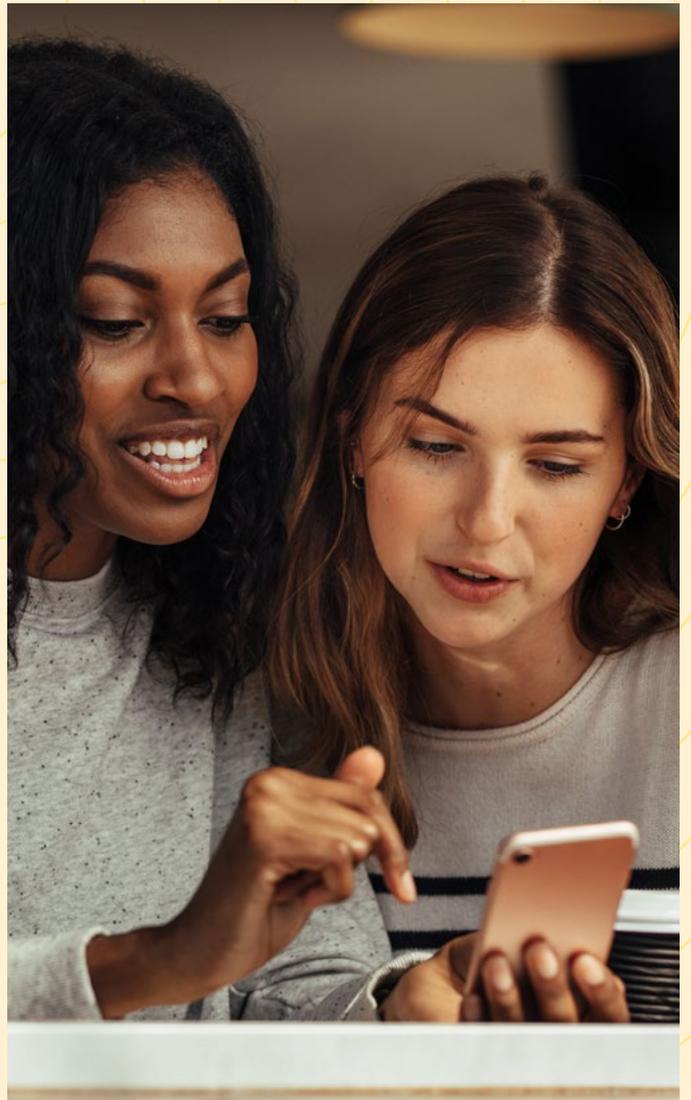
→ [NSW Government Funding Acknowledgment Guidelines](#).



10



Important information



10 Important information

Advice and support

Frequently asked questions and other resources to assist applicants are located on the

→ [NSW Government grants and funding finder](#) and may be updated throughout the application period.

The Regional Digital Connectivity team are available to answer questions about the grant opportunity. Please contact mcp.grants@regional.nsw.gov.au for more information. The department will endeavour to respond to all questions within three (3) business days. Please note, the department is not able to assist applicants with the preparation of their application.

Applicants are encouraged to seek advice from their legal, business, and financial advisers to determine the suitability of the funding before applying.

Probity

The department will ensure the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the NSW Government requirements.

Independent probity advisors, O'Connor Marsden and Associates (OCM) will provide guidance to the department and the assessment panel on any issues concerning integrity, fairness and accountability that may arise throughout the application, assessment, and decision-making process.

Prospective applicants may contact the department's probity advisors to discuss any probity related concerns using the below details:

Name Beth Nilan
Phone 0425 809 856
Email bnilan@ocm.net.au

Feedback and complaints

Feedback or complaints about this grant opportunity can be submitted in writing to mcp.grants@regional.nsw.gov.au

If you do not agree with the way your feedback or complaint has been handled, you may wish to contact the department via regional@yourfeedback.nsw.gov.au or contact the NSW Ombudsman via

→ ombo.nsw.gov.au

Conflict of interests

Applicants will be asked to declare any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest as part of the application process. Where a conflict of interest that is detrimental to the assessment process is identified, mitigation measures will be put in place, or a program person may be asked not to participate in the grant application, assessment or delivery component of the process.

If at any time you identify any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest, you must inform the department immediately by emailing mcp.grants@regional.nsw.gov.au

Government Information (Public Access) Act

Applicants should be aware that information submitted in applications and all related correspondence, attachments and other documents may be made publicly available under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW) (GIPA Act). Subject to the terms of the GIPA Act, information determined by the department to be commercially sensitive may be withheld.

The GIPA Act makes government information accessible to the public by:

- requiring government agencies to make certain sorts of information available
- encouraging government agencies to release as much other information as possible
- giving the public an enforceable right to make access applications for government information
- restricting access to information where there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

Copyright

This publication is protected by copyright with the exception of:

- any coat of arms, logo, trademark or other branding
- any third-party intellectual property
- personal information such as photographs of people.

10 Important information

Additional conditions

No representation, warranty or guarantee

The department does not represent, warrant or guarantee, and accepts no legal liability whatsoever arising from or connected to, the accuracy, reliability, currency or completeness of any material contained in this publication. Information in this publication is provided as general information only and is not intended as a substitute for advice from a qualified professional.

Applicant's skill and judgment

The department recommends that users exercise care and use their own skill and judgment in using information from this publication and that users carefully evaluate the accuracy, currency, completeness and relevance of such information. Users should take steps to independently verify the information in this publication and, where appropriate, seek professional advice.

No obligation to update

The information contained herein and the matters to which it relates may be amended, updated or withdrawn at any time, at the department's discretion. However, the department does not accept any responsibility to update, supplement or correct any documentation, nor to inform applicants about any matter that may affect their application.

No liability

The department expressly disclaims all liability for any loss or damage incurred by any person arising from, or because of, any person's use of or reliance on any information, statement, opinion or matter (express or implied) contained in, derived from, or omitted from these guidelines, except for any liability which cannot be excluded under law.

No offer

These guidelines are not an offer, recommendation or invitation by the department in respect of any contract or commitment and, subject to a Funding Deed being fully executed by the parties to it, nothing in these guidelines will form the basis of any contract or commitment.

Department discretion

Notwithstanding anything else in these guidelines, by applying, applicants acknowledge and agree the department has the right (in its absolute discretion) to reject, refuse to consider or cease to assess an application, at any time, if the department is of the view (in its absolute discretion) that an application is unlikely to be successful.

Department rights

The department may, in its absolute discretion, and without limiting any other right which the department may have, do all or any of the following at any time without giving notice or reasons:

- require additional information from an applicant
- change any of the requirements of these guidelines
- alter or vary any process, procedure or timing related to the grant opportunity, including any process, procedure or timing regarding the consideration or the evaluation of any proposal or all applications
- suspend or terminate the grant opportunity
- negotiate with one or more preferred applicants without prior notice to any other applicant
- terminate any negotiations being conducted with any applicant
- readvertise for new applicants
- consider any non-conforming application
- terminate further participation in the grant opportunity by any applicant for any reason (including if the department reasonably considers an application to contain any false or misleading claims or statements)
- not proceed with any funding deed, or
- proceed with a funding deed in ways not contemplated in these guidelines.

Intellectual property

All intellectual property rights in these guidelines remain the property of the department. Applicants are permitted to use these guidelines for the purpose of preparing an application only. Applicants must not use these guidelines or any information contained in these guidelines for any other purpose.

Applications submitted in response to these guidelines remain the property of the applicant, unless otherwise agreed between the applicant and the department. The applicant agrees that the department may make copies and reproduce applications for any purpose related to the grant opportunity. In addition, the department will retain (electronic and hard) copies of all applications.

Confidentiality

An applicant must not disclose or provide to any person, other than to persons engaged in the preparation of its application, any particulars concerning its application or any other information it has been provided by the department or any other person on behalf of the department, without the prior consent in writing of the department.

10 Important information

Addenda

The department may, in its absolute discretion, issue an addendum to these guidelines. In each case, an addendum becomes part of these guidelines.

Costs and expenses

Applicants are responsible for their own costs and expenses relating to the preparation of their application, participation in the process and conduct of any negotiations with the department.

Relationship

Nothing in these guidelines constitutes any partnership, joint venture, agency or other relationship between an applicant and the department.

Amendments

These guidelines are subject to change at any time at the sole discretion of the department.

Delivering
better
mobile
coverage
now and for
the future



A



Appendices

Appendix A: Minimum requirements

Unless otherwise indicated, this section sets out the minimum requirements that applicants will need to comply with if their application is successful. Proposed active sharing mobile solutions that do not meet the minimum requirements may be excluded from further consideration at the department's absolute discretion during eligibility assessment.

Service requirements

Proposed active sharing mobile solutions must use active infrastructure sharing to deliver new handheld coverage or overlapping handheld coverage from each of the applicant's access seekers and access providers (if applicable) networks to an eligible location.

Where an applicant seeks funding for a cluster solution, all solutions forming part of the cluster must provide new handheld coverage or overlapping handheld coverage to an eligible location.

The following active infrastructure sharing types will be accepted by the department for consideration for funding:

- Multi-Operator Radio Access Network (MORAN)
- Multi-Operator Core Network (MOCN)
- Core Network Sharing (CN Sharing)
- Domestic roaming.

Proposed active sharing mobile solutions may consider a hybrid approach to active infrastructure sharing (for example a MOCN solution with a MORAN overlay).

Proposed active sharing mobile solutions may also consider the use of Open-RAN (O-RAN) and/or any other standardised interfaces, approaches and technologies to deliver an active infrastructure sharing service.

Proposed active sharing mobile solutions must enable consumers to perform a range of functions using mobile devices, such as making and receiving phone calls, sending emails and text messages, browsing the internet, accessing online services, downloading files, using mobile apps, and accessing emergency communications services. To meet this expectation:

- all proposed active sharing mobile solutions will be required to deliver, at a minimum, 4G broadband data and voice services for the applicant's access seekers and access providers (if applicable) networks
- applicants must provide coverage modelling (**improved handheld coverage maps**) for all proposed active sharing mobile solutions identifying each solution's predicted new handheld coverage and overlapping coverage (**predictive coverage zone**) for the applicant's access seekers and access providers (if applicable) networks with an outdoor Reference Signal Received Power (RSRP) at a 90 per cent confidence level for the cell area
- coverage modelling must be provided in either MapInfo TAB, ESRI Shape or GML format and must be capable of being overlaid with each applicant organisation's handheld 4G and 5G coverage maps provided during organisation registration
- coverage modelling must have a granularity no greater than 100 metres squared, with an RSRP resolution of 1-dBm, down to a minimum value of -120 dBm.

All proposed active sharing mobile solutions will be required to deliver mobile services in accordance with the *Telecommunications Act 1997* (Cth) and other applicable laws and regulatory requirements.

Proposed active sharing mobile solutions must have an auxiliary back-up power supply which provides back-up power for a minimum of 12 hours in the event of the loss of external power to the site, unless otherwise agreed by the department.

Co-location and co-build – Mobile coverage solutions

Access providers must offer active sharing on a funded active sharing mobile solution to all MNOs and passive sharing to all other non-MNO access seekers, including NSW Government agencies, which were not part of the project team at the time of application submission. This is subject to the following requirements of this section.

Access providers must, in accordance with Appendix B, grant rights to the Department in respect of any funded assets. The department's rights will be subordinate to the rights granted to:

- access seekers that are MNOs to access the active sharing mobile solution, for the purpose of engaging in active sharing, and

Appendix A: Minimum requirements

- access seekers that are non-MNOs to access that part of the funded asset that does not comprise the active component of the active sharing mobile solution, for the purpose of engaging in passive sharing.

Access for the purpose of engaging in active and passive sharing must be offered for a minimum period of 10 years from the date the funded active sharing mobile solution is RFS on a non-discriminatory basis in accordance with the Facilities Access Code to late entrant access seekers.

If a proposed active sharing mobile solution is approved for funding, the access provider must subject to these guidelines commence access negotiations for active and passive sharing on the funded active sharing mobile solution as soon as possible after contract execution of the funding deed and before commencing the funded active sharing mobile solution's detailed design phase. In doing so, the access provider must:

- write to access seekers which did not form part of the project team at the time of application offering the opportunity to:
 - if an MNO, to actively share on the funded active sharing mobile solution, or
 - non-MNO access seekers to passively co-locate on the part of the funded asset that does not comprise the active component of the active sharing mobile solution
- negotiate in good faith with all organisations that satisfy the requirements of these guidelines and express interest in active or passive sharing on funded active sharing mobile solutions, including regarding the terms and conditions of such an arrangement (particularly regarding price)
- if technically feasible, allow additional access seekers who have entered into commercial agreements with the access provider to actively share on the funded active sharing mobile solution to participate in the funded active sharing mobile solution's design and build phases, and
- provide the estimated incremental cost (based on a desktop analysis) of the funded active sharing mobile solution supporting additional access providers (both passive and active) to the department and the project team's access seekers.

The capital contribution to be made by an access seeker in respect of a funded active sharing mobile solution must, at least, equal the incremental cost incurred by the access provider by reason of provisioning the access for that funded active sharing mobile solution.

Where a funded active sharing mobile solution's access provider reaches an agreement with an additional access seeker regarding access to the funded active sharing mobile solution, the access provider must offer backhaul to the additional party if it is in a position to do so.

The terms and pricing of backhaul services provided by a grantee to an access seeker must be negotiated commercially in good faith and in accordance with the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Cth), *Telecommunications Act 1997* (Cth) and relevant codes, determinations and other instruments.

Appendix B: Licence to the Department

1. An access provider that receives funding (i.e. the **funded access provider**) that is to be applied in whole or part towards any costs, charges or expenses relating to the build or any works in respect of any *facility, telecommunications transmission tower, sites or eligible underground facilities* (collectively, **Telecommunications Assets**) agrees to grant a perpetual, irrevocable, exclusive, royalty-free licence to the department to the parts of such Telecommunications Assets described in paragraph 2 (**Licensed Facilities**) for the purposes of the department and the NSW Government (**Licence**).
2. The Licensed Facilities comprise those parts of the Telecommunications Assets that do not include:
 - (a) any assets or facilities that are utilised by access seekers that are MNOs for the purpose of those MNOs engaging in active sharing; or
 - (b) any assets or facilities that are utilised by access seekers that are non-MNOs for the purpose of those non-MNOs engaging in passive sharing.
3. As contemplated by sections 372L(8), 581Y(4)(a) and 581ZD(8)(a), and clauses 17(2A)(a), 33(6)(a), 34(6)(a) and 35(6)(a) of Schedule 1, of the *Telecommunications Act 1997* (Cth) a funded access provider must not grant any rights in the Licensed Facilities to an MNO which proposes to use the Telecommunications Assets for a purpose which would deprive the department or NSW Government of any right to fully exploit the Licence.
4. Subject to the provision of written notice by the department to the access provider, the Licence may be vested in or transferred by the department to any other NSW Government agency or any successor department or agency to the department.
5. Italicised terms which are used in paragraph 1 that are defined in the *Telecommunications Act 1997* (Cth) have the meanings given in that Act.

Appendix C: Glossary

Term	Definition
Access charge	Charges proposed to be paid by an access seeker to an access provider to access the active sharing mobile solution to provide a mobile service.
Access provider	A carrier (as defined under the <i>Telecommunications Act 1997 (Cth)</i>) or eligible company (as defined in Part 34B of the <i>Telecommunications Act 1997 (Cth)</i>) that is responsible for a proposed active sharing solution's design, build, operation and maintenance.
Access seeker	A mobile network operator seeking to provide a mobile service using the active sharing mobile solution.
Active infrastructure sharing	The sharing of electronic infrastructure of the network including radio access network (consisting of antennas/transceivers, base station, backhaul networks and controllers) and core network (consisting of servers and core network functionalities).
Active sharing mobile solution	Mobile solutions that use active infrastructure sharing to deliver new and improved mobile coverage.
Active Sharing Partnership	The grant opportunity described on page 6, as determined by the department.
Applicant	Refers to a project team consisting of one access provider and one or more access seekers who submit a joint application for funding under the grant opportunity.
Assessment criteria	The principles or standards against which applications will be assessed and ranked by the assessment panel based on their merit.
Assessment panel	A panel comprising of expert representatives (internal and external to Government) responsible for assessing each application on its merit and compared to other eligible applications before making a recommendation to the decision maker.
Data Sheet	A template provided by the department for inputting all applicant data regarding the active sharing mobile solution.
Backhaul	A link between the core or backbone of a network and sub networks, transporting data from a series of disparate locations to a more centralised location.
Capital infrastructure cost	The total construction costs (including all materials and equipment, labour and services) associated with the construction of a proposed active sharing mobile solution.
Cluster solution	An active sharing mobile solution comprising two or more (up to a maximum of fifteen) base stations that the applicant is putting forward as a single proposal due to economic and/or network design benefits (e.g., a series of base stations along a transport corridor).
Coverage benefit calculation	A calculation used to assess the value of the level of new handheld coverage or overlapping handheld coverage provided by the proposed active sharing mobile solution as outlined in criterion 1 of the assessment criteria.
Department	Department of Regional NSW.
Domestic roaming	Traffic from a subscriber of one operator is carried and routed on the network of another operator with this arrangement underpinned by a roaming agreement.
Eligibility criteria	Mandatory criteria which the application and project team must meet to progress to assessment.

Appendix C: Glossary

Term	Definition
Eligible location	Areas of Regional NSW, where there is no existing handheld coverage provided by any MNO, or existing handheld coverage is provided by only one MNO. Additionally, any location identified in the department's list of preferred locations and corridors.
Eligible project expenditure	Has the meaning given on pages 11.
Evidence of Commitment	Has the meaning given on page 8.
Existing handheld coverage	Coverage able to be obtained with a handheld mobile device that is currently available within the current mobile coverage area of at least one MNO, in accordance with the publicly available coverage maps from all MNOs or handheld 4G and 5G coverage maps submitted by organisations during the registration process; or that will be provided by any base station funded under any Australian Government, state or territory connectivity program including the Mobile Black Spot Program or Regional Connectivity Program.
Facilities Access Code	<i>A Code of Access to Telecommunications Transmission Towers, Sites of Towers and Underground Facilities</i> made under the <i>Telecommunications Act 1997</i> (Cth).
Financial Year	The Australian company financial year reporting period being 1 July to 30 June, irrespective of the applicant's internal financial year reporting periods.
Funded active sharing mobile solution	An active sharing mobile solution that is approved for funding by the department.
Funding deed	An agreement that outlines the terms and conditions of the grant funding including proposed financial contributions, the recipient's obligations and monitoring and acquittal requirements.
Grant	An arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the NSW Government whereby money: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is paid to a grantee other than the NSW Government • is intended to help address one or more of the NSW Government's policy outcomes • is intended to assist the grantee to achieve its objectives • does not result in the return of goods or services by the grantee of an equivalent value to the NSW Government.
Grantee	An organisation that has been selected by the department to receive a Grant pursuant to these guidelines.
Integration costs	Direct incremental costs associated with the establishment of an active sharing network, where not already provided by the access seeker.
4G 5G handheld coverage maps	Coverage modelling submitted by applicants detailing proposed active sharing solutions predicted new handheld coverage and overlapping coverage modelled off the requirements contained in Appendix A.
Late entrant access seekers	Access seekers which did not form part of the project team at the time of application who seek to actively share on the funded active sharing mobile solution at a later date.
Minimum operational period	The length of time a proposed active sharing mobile solution is required to provide the services for which it was funded - being 10 years commencing from the date that the active sharing mobile solution is deemed RFS, unless otherwise agreed by the department.

Appendix C: Glossary

Term	Definition
Minimum requirements	The minimum requirements outlined in Annexure A. These requirements must be met in order for a project to be eligible for funding.
Mobile resellers and mobile virtual network operator (MVNOs)	Organisations that do not own their own wireless network but are provided phone and data services from MNOs at discounted wholesale rates for resale to their customers.
Multi-operator core network (MOCN)	Radio access networks and spectrum are shared, and core network sharing, where servers and core network functionalities are shared.
Multi-operator radio access network (MORAN)	Radio access networks are shared, and dedicated spectrum is used, by each sharing operator.
New handheld coverage	Coverage provided by a proposed active sharing mobile solution that will be able to be obtained with a handheld mobile device in an area that does not currently receive existing handheld coverage.
Overlapping handheld coverage	Coverage provided by a proposed active sharing mobile solution able to be obtained with a handheld mobile device that is new handheld coverage for a participant MNO but overlaps existing handheld coverage from one other MNO.
Passive sharing	The sharing of space or physical supporting infrastructure which does not require active operation co-ordination between network operators.
Phase 1	A request for proposal that invited interested parties to form project teams to design active sharing mobile solutions and their underpinning commercial arrangements for potential implementation in regional NSW. For further information please refer to → nsw.gov.au/snowy-hydro-legacy-fund/regional-digital-connectivity-program/mobile-coverage-project
Predictive coverage zone	New handheld coverage and overlapping coverage (at a minimum 4G) predicted to be provided by a proposed active sharing mobile solution.
Preferred locations	A list of locations identified by the department released to registered organisations under a Confidentiality Deed Poll.
Reference signal received power (RSRP)	A key measure of signal strength for Long-Term Evolution (LTE) networks that examines the power of the LTE Reference Signals spread over the full bandwidth and narrow band.
Regional NSW	The 93 Local Government Areas (LGAs), the Unincorporated Far West, and Lord Howe Island, as listed in the grant opportunity's Frequently Asked Questions.
Service requirements	The minimum service requirements for active sharing mobile solutions outlined in Appendix A.
SmartyGrants Portal	The department's grants administration system through which applications must be submitted.
Stage 1 Mobile Coverage Project	The initial round of the Department's mobile coverage project which committed to invest \$50 million to deliver targeted coverage improvement in regional NSW and develop active sharing partnerships with the telecommunications industry.



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