

Women In Construction Industry Innovation Program – Grant Guidelines – Year 2



Image taken at North Sydney Public School Project, School Infrastructure NSW

Background

The NSW Government is taking active steps to make the construction industry a more diverse, inclusive and safe workplace for women.

The NSW Government committed to an investment of \$20.2 million to attract more women into the construction industry.

To achieve this vision, the NSW Government has developed the Women in Construction (WiC) strategy which includes the following complementary pillars:

- **Removing obstacles:** removing obstacles that prevent women from entering the construction industry and implement reforms to create safe and inclusive workplaces.
- Creating desire and awareness: creating desire and awareness to encourage women to choose a career in construction, with a focus on the benefits and opportunities construction offers.
- Fulfilment / retention: creating easy and clear pathways for women to apply, enter and progress in the industry and providing active support and case management to retain women in the industry; and
- Accountability: keeping Government and industry accountable to increase the number of women in construction.

The WiC Industry Innovation Program (IIP) is one of the initiatives created to achieve the NSW Government's goal and deliver projects that align with the four pillars.

Objective

The objective of the IIP is to support industry initiatives that will encourage the participation and retention of women in the construction industry by:

- Creating inclusive workplace cultures, including by improving employee wellbeing and supporting flexible working arrangements;
- Increasing the number of women entering and staying in the industry; and
- Supporting women in leadership and female employees.

Purpose

These Guidelines outline key objectives, eligibility criteria, assessment criteria, assessment processes and timeframes for IIP Grant Year 2.

Consultation

The design of the IIP has been informed through consultation undertaken by Infrastructure NSW (INSW) and the Department of Education (DoE) with NSW Government infrastructure agencies and construction industry participants, including contractors, sub-contractors, trade unions and industry associations.

Probity and Governance

The IIP Grant Year 2 will be subject to strict governance and probity with fair and transparent assessment processes. All decisions made under the IIP Grant Year 2 will be made in accordance with these Guidelines and the associated assessment criteria.

An independent probity advisor will provide guidance on issues concerning integrity, fairness and accountability that may arise throughout the submission, assessment, and decision processes. This will help ensure decisions are made with integrity, fairness, and accountability, while delivering value for money for NSW against the objectives of the IIP.

The IIP Grant Year 2 will be administered by DoE on behalf of INSW.

Evaluation and monitoring

Once the IIP Funding Deed is executed by both parties, the IIP Grant Year 2 funding recipients will be required to:

- participate in ongoing reporting and monitoring of their IIP projects.
- collect information and report to NSW Government on project specific data to measure and evaluate project's progress and outcomes.

DoE will:

- monitor the project delivery and progression in line with the IIP Funding Deed.
- Implement progressive monitoring and evaluation of the achievement against the agreed deliverables/outputs/outcomes and activities throughout the duration of the project.
- Complete a final evaluation at the completion of the project.

Evaluation of the IIP will enable robust assessment, provide confidence in the integrity of the process and inform future improvements and policy development.

Monitoring and evaluation of the IIP Grant Year 2 will be undertaken in-line with the NSW Treasury Policy and Guidelines: Evaluation TPG22-22, and the Department of Premier and Cabinet Grants Administration Guide (2022). The evaluation will assess:

- Effectiveness of the IIP Grant design, implementation and delivery of the IIP objective(s).
- Progress towards achieving IIP outcomes.
- Alignment of delivered IIP outcomes to the IIP objective(s).

Industry Innovation Program Grant Year 2

Grant Funding and Grant Period

Successful IIP applicants will be awarded grant amounts from \$30,000 up to a maximum of \$300,000 per applicant.

Applicants can submit multiple applications for different projects, however the IIP Grant funding cap of \$300,000 applies to the total funding amount of all submitted projects per applicant for the IIP Grant Year 2. If an applicant submits multiple eligible applications where the total IIP Grant funding exceeds the funding cap, the Assessment Panel will decide which applications may be recommended for funding.

The purpose of the funding cap is to maximise the benefits and diversity of the IIP across the industry, to support a range of different projects and different parts of the construction sector supply chain.

All IIP Grant Year 2 funding recipients must spend the IIP Grant funding and complete the funded activity within the activity period specified in the IIP Funding Deed and can only commence their projects after the IIP Funding Deed has been executed by both parties.

NSW Government makes no binding funding commitment to an applicant, until the IIP Funding Deed has been executed by both parties.

Applicant Eligibility Criteria

Eligible applicants

Eligible applicants must:

- Be an Australian legal entity that has legal right to execute an IIP Funding Deed in its own name
- Be a construction business, trade union or construction industry association in any Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) recognised construction sector or a business partnering with construction-related business(es), including delivering services to construction businesses.
- Be a legal entity with a current Australian Business Number (ABN) or Australian Company Number (ACN).
- Provide construction or construction-related services in NSW or be an industry association or trade union representing members in NSW.
 - Construction business or construction-related business must demonstrate current employment of women in non-traditional occupations.
 - Trade union or industry association must demonstrate current membership of women in non-traditional occupations (refer to *Definitions* section).
- Be financially viable and have the capacity to deliver proposed project within the term of IIP Grant Year 2 funding.

Where an application comprises a consortium or partnership arrangement with more than one entity, the application needs to clearly identify the lead party that NSW Government will enter into the funding agreement with, should the application be awarded funding.

Ineligible Applicants

Ineligible applicants are:

- NSW local government council
- Joint organisations of councils
- A department or agency of NSW Government (including TAFE NSW)
- NSW State owned corporations
- Commonwealth authorities
- Entities that are not Australian legal entities and/or cannot execute an IIP Funding Deed in their own name, e.g. an arm of an overseas entity.

Project Eligibility Criteria

Eligible Projects

In their application, applicants must demonstrate that their IIP project:

- Aligns to the following IIP outcomes that will encourage participation and retention of women in construction industry:
 - Creating inclusive workplace cultures;
 - o Increasing the number of women entering and staying in the industry; and
 - o Supporting women in leadership and female employees.
- Will be fully delivered within NSW.
- Involves the construction industry.
- Has the potential for scalability and sustainability of the proposed project post-funding.
- Is an innovative approach that differs from their business-as-usual activities.
- Can be delivered within the required timeframe (refer to Key Dates section).
- Includes required evidence to support the project proposal.
- Is not an existing contractual obligation under a contract with the NSW Government.

Ineligible Projects

Ineligible projects are:

- Projects that would be considered as applicant's business-as-usual activities or operations.
- Projects that will not be delivered within the required timeframe (refer to Key Dates section).
- School visits or attending trade shows/fairs and exhibitions.
- Projects that do not involve the construction industry.
- Projects that are not aligned to the objectives and outcomes of the IIP Grant.
- Project proposals that consist of 50% or more of ineligible costs.
- Projects that are not fully delivered within NSW.

Project Cost Eligibility Criteria

Eligible Costs

Eligible IIP Grant costs include:

- Costs directly related to the delivery of the IIP project.
- Contingency costs directly related to the requested funding activities capped at no more than 10 per cent of the total value of the requested funding amount.

Ineligible Costs

Ineligible IIP Grant costs include:

- Costs not directly associated with the proposed IIP project.
- Costs associated with the applicant's contractual obligations on existing or tendered construction NSW Government projects.
- Costs for activities that are a legal requirement of the applicant, e.g. insurance.
- Administration costs e.g. fees, charges and subscriptions.
- Background screening checks such as working with children checks or national police checks.
- Costs that can be considered business-as-usual costs, e.g. startup costs, legal costs, vehicle costs, office space and equipment, depreciation.
- Costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation.
- Ongoing operational and maintenance costs such as: advertising, stationary items, logos, banners, display boards, uniforms, or other things that advertise your organisation/group unless such advertising is directly related to a women in construction strategy.
- Repayment of existing debts or budget deficits.
- Retrospective costs including costs incurred prior to the execution of the IIP Funding Deed and the activity start date specified in the IIP Funding Deed.
- Costs for consumables, e.g. food, catering, hospitality costs and non-fixed items, such as gift cards, tables, chairs, whitegoods.
- Purchase of vehicles.
- Scholarships for participants.
- Salary/wages and entitlements for employees not specifically engaged to deliver the project(s). Salary/wages of existing employees who will contribute to the project (e.g. marketing, administration staff) must be included as an in-kind contribution.
- Costs for participants' wages/salaries.
- Costs of initiatives simultaneously funded, or initiatives that can be funded through other NSW or Australian Government Grants and/or programs. E.g. Women in Constructionfocused Infrastructure Skills Legacy Program, Connecting Women to Trades, The Regional Industry Education Partnerships.
- Costs that require recurrent or ongoing funding from the NSW Government.
- Donations.
- Costs associated with accredited training for full or part qualifications.

Where an application does not meet the above Applicant, Project or Cost Eligibility Criteria, or where more than 50% of the proposed costs are deemed ineligible, NSW Government will deem the application to be ineligible and may set it aside from further consideration.

The NSW Government reserves the right to seek clarification or further information from applicants to confirm eligibility against the Applicant, Project and Cost Eligibility Criteria, within the parameters of probity and fairness.

How to apply

Applications must be submitted electronically through the DoE SmartyGrants portal before the closing date and time. Refer to *Key Dates* section for the application closing details. Applicants should note that the SmartyGrants portal will lock at the closing time and date.

NSW Government reserves the right:

- To extend the application period and/or accept late applications in exceptional circumstances such as a pandemic or a natural disaster; and
- To not consider applications that are incomplete or have not been submitted through the SmartyGrants platform by the due date and time.

Applicants are required to keep a copy of their application and any supporting documents.

If your application has been successfully submitted, you will receive an automated email notification from SmartyGrants, acknowledging the receipt of your application. Please retain this receipt for your records.

Who to contact for help

Technical assistance

If you require assistance with lodging your application via the SmartyGrants portal, you can contact the SmartyGrants help hub via:

- SmartyGrants applicant help hub website
- o +61 3 9320 6888 or
- o email: service@smartyGrants.com.au.

• Questions about the IIP Grant

For questions about the IIP Grant, please email DoE team on wic@det.nsw.edu.au.

DoE team is available to provide:

- Basic IT support to help applicants submit their application if needed.
- General information about the IIP Grant. The DoE team cannot provide advice regarding individual application questions e.g. confirming organisation or project eligibility.

Please note all IIP Grant related questions will be responded to via email and, where relevant, published with the IIP Grant information. Please refer to *Key Dates* section for the last day of the question-and-answer period. After this period, only questions about using and/or submitting the application form will be answered.

Assessment

All applications will be assessed in the same manner.

All applications will be assessed for eligibility against the Applicant, Project and Cost Eligibility Criteria. Eligible applications will then be assessed against the Assessment Criteria.

Eligible applications will be assessed by an Assessment Panel (the Panel). The Panel will consist of NSW Government representatives including DoE and INSW.

During the assessment process:

- An applicant may be asked to clarify or provide additional information to assist the Panel in the assessment process. Any additional/unsolicited information provided by an applicant that could change the original submitted application after the closing time will not be accepted.
- The Panel may obtain subject matter expert advice on the alignment of the applications with the Eligibility and/or Assessment Criteria.

The Panel may, at their discretion:

- assess a project as recommended for part-funding. Applicants should provide information in their application on whether the allocation of part-funding would prevent them from delivering their proposed project.
- refer the project to other Australian or NSW Government funding programs for consideration.

While financial and/or in-kind contributions by applicants are not mandatory, the NSW Government reserves the right to assess applications which include co-contributions from the applicant as part of the value assessment.

Please note:

NSW Government reserve the right to:

- Take into consideration information regarding previous experience and performance with any applicant relevant to this program when making funding recommendations.
- Not award funding to applicants with outstanding acquittals from other government grants.
- Not award funding to applicants who have had a NSW Government contract cancelled, suspended or terminated within last three years due to not meeting the contract requirements or other performance matters.

Assessment Process

Process Stage	Process Step Summary
Step 1 - Application Process	Step 1.1 – Invitation to Apply Information about the IIP Grant Year 2 will be advertised online in an open forum and provided to construction businesses, trade unions and other organisations known to DoE and INSW. Applications will be submitted electronically through the DoE SmartyGrants portal.

Process Stage	Process Step Summary
	Step 1.2 – Application Support The DoE team will be available to support applicants with general IIP Grant advice and technical support to submit the applications. The DoE team is unable to provide specific advice about individual applications e.g. eligibility of applicant or project. Step 1.3 – Application Submitted
	Only applications submitted via the DoE SmartyGrants portal prior to the closing date and time will be assessed.
Step 2 - Assessment Process	Step 2.1 – Eligibility Assessment The DoE team will assess the eligibility of all applications against the Eligibility Criteria. This will include eligibility assessment of Applicants, Projects and Costs. Ineligible applications may be set aside from further evaluation.
	Step 2.2 – Assessment Panel The Panel will assess each eligible application against the Assessment Criteria to consider the individual merits, the alignment of each project and value for money considerations. The Panel will provide a recommendation for approval following assessment.
Step 3 - Recommendation and Approval Process	Step 3.1 – Recommendation and Approval Recommendations will be submitted to the INSW Women in Construction Steering Committee for consideration and approval. Approved projects will then be submitted to DoE Secretary for endorsement of funding release.
	Step 3.2 – Applicant Notification Both successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified of the outcome in writing via email. Successful applicants will be issued IIP Funding Deeds which must be signed by the successful applicant by the required date (refer to Key Dates section) and prior to the commencement of their IIP project.
	Step 3.3 – Announcement Public announcement of the decision may be made and information about Grants awarded will be published on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder website within 45 days of executing the IIP Funding Deed.

Assessment Criteria

Eligible applications will be considered as part of the merit based, competitive assessment of applications against the Assessment Criteria outlined in the table below.

During the assessment process, the Panel may apply a minimum scoring requirement to one or more of the criteria. Where an application does not meet a minimum scoring requirement, the Panel reserves the right to remove the application from further consideration.

• Their project is viable and can be delivered within the set timeframes with dedicated resources.

Details should include:

- Skills and capacity to deliver the project either through past performance in delivering similar projects (for example, detailing managerial capability to carry out the project) or evidence of appropriate consultations to ensure capacity and support for the project.
- Suitability of the staff or arrangements to deliver the project.
- Appropriate project design, scoping and planning, including project timeline.
- SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) deliverables/outcomes/outputs, including identifying and outlining activities required to achieve the deliverables.
- Project risks and appropriate mitigation strategies.

Locality (5% weighting)

Requirement

The applicant must demonstrate where in NSW the project will be delivered. Projects that are partially or fully delivered within regional and/or rural area (those outside Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle or Central Coast) will be assessed more favorably.

Details should include:

- Whether the project will be delivered primarily within NSW metropolitan area(s).
- Whether the project will be delivered within both NSW metropolitan as well as regional and/or rural areas.
- Whether the project will be delivered primarily within NSW regional and/or rural areas.

Scalability and Sustainability (20% weighting)

Requirement

The applicant must demonstrate that the project is sustainable and scalable so it can be expanded and/or replicated across more construction businesses or sites.

Details should include:

- Outline of sustainability of the project post IIP funding.
- How the project will be scalable.

Value (20%weighting)

Requirement

The applicant must demonstrate:

- How the project represents the best value for money proposition for meeting the objectives of the IIP.
- All project costs are clearly identified and relevant evidence is provided.

Details should include:

 All costs throughout the life of the project that have been identified, validated and included in the budget.

- Evidence that provides sufficient and relevant information.
- Outline of how the project can be delivered within the identified budget and represents value for money.
- Proposed co-contributions and their composition e.g. financial contribution and in-kind contributions etc.
- Project costs that align with the Project Cost Eligibility Criteria.

Approval

The Panel will submit recommendations for funding approval to:

- The INSW Women in Construction Steering Committee; and
- The DoE Secretary

Both successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing via email of the application outcome.

Successful applicants will be required to sign an IIP Funding Deed with DoE prior to receiving funds and can only commence implementation of their IIP project after the IIP Funding Deed has been executed by both parties.

Successful applicants will be required to:

- Agree to information on the project, including the name of the applicant, name of the project and amount of funding awarded, being publicly disclosed on the NSW Government Grants and Funding website.
- Agree to the terms and conditions specified in the IIP Funding Deed and execute the IIP Funding Deed with the NSW Government by the required date (refer to *Key Dates* section).
- Provide additional documentation on claims.
- Agree to participate in regular reporting, monitoring and evaluation during the delivery and at the completion of the project(s). This includes online and in person meetings, ongoing reporting throughout the project, completing surveys and providing evidence of how projects resulted in measurable benefits consistent with the objectives of the IIP. This will be required to determine the extent to which the funded project(s) have contributed to the objectives of IIP.
- Incur the IIP Grant expenditure between the activity period start date and the end date, outlined in the IIP Funding Deed and only after the IIP Funding Deed has been executed by both parties.
- Understand that the NSW Government will publish and may choose to publicly announce information about grants awarded. Successful applicants may be requested to keep the IIP Grant confidential for a period of time if an announcement is to be made by the NSW and/or Australian Governments.
- Understand that the NSW Government reserves the right to use funding recipient and project information in media regarding the IIP. Information may be used in the form of press releases, case studies, promotional material and in response to media enquires relevant to the IIP.
- Comply with the requirement to seek publishing approvals and acknowledge the financial support by the NSW Government in all public announcements related to the IIP project.

- Receive IIP Grant payments via milestone payments set out in the IIP Funding Deed. Timing
 and requirements of the payments may vary depending on the scope and timelines of the
 project.
- Pay back funds which have not been spent and/or cannot be proven to be spent in accordance with the IIP Funding Deed.
- Understand that requests for variations or changes to the project will only be considered in limited circumstances.
- Understand that DoE and/or INSW reserve the right to undertake an audit of IIP Grant funding within seven years. Funding recipients are required to keep an appropriate paper trail for audit and assurance purposes.

Key Dates

Key Activities	Key Date*
IIP Year 2 Applications open	Monday 22 January 2024
Pre-recorded Industry Briefing will be published by	Wednesday 31 January 2024
Question and Answer period ends	Thursday 8 February 2024
Applications close	2pm Monday 19 February 2024
Assessment	20 February 2024 - May 2024
Approval and announcement of successful projects	From May - June 2024
IIP Funding Deeds signed by successful applicants	By 17 June 2024
IIP Grant projects and expenditure of funding commence	From 1 July 2024
IIP Grant projects and expenditure ends	30 June 2025

^{*}NSW Government reserves the right to amend any of the above dates at any time.

IIP Funding Deed

The IIP Funding Deed includes general/standard terms and conditions that cannot be changed. Sample IIP Funding Deed is available as part of the IIP Grant documentation.

NSW Government makes no binding funding commitment to an applicant, until the IIP Funding Deed has been executed by both parties.

Applicants will be required to do the following as part of their IIP application:

- Confirm they have read and understand obligations under the IIP Funding Deed.
- Confirm that, if required, they have sought legal advice about the IIP Funding Deed prior to submitting their IIP application.

- Confirm that, if successful, they will accept the terms and conditions specified in the IIP
 Funding Deed. Please note: Requests for changes to the IIP Funding Deed will only be
 considered in exceptional circumstances and must be submitted at the time of the
 application.
- If required, submit proposed changes to the IIP Funding Deed. No further requests for changes will be considered at later stages.

Successful applicants will be required to:

- Sign the IIP Funding Deed by specified date (refer to Key Dates section). NSW Government reserve the right to withdraw the IIP funding offer if the applicant does not comply with this requirement.
- Commence their IIP projects and spend the approved IIP funding only after the IIP Funding Deed has been executed by both parties.
- Deliver the IIP project and related activities with the Activity Period specified in the IIP Funding Deed.
- Pay back any unspent IIP funding at the end of the Activity Period.
- Provide audited financial acquittals at the conclusion of the project, in line with the IIP Funding Deed requirements.

The NSW Government may withhold or recover IIP Grant funds if there is a breach of the IIP Funding Deed or if the funding is not spent in line with the IIP requirements.

Definitions

Women in non-traditional construction occupations/roles is defined as:

• Women employed in both non-trade and trade occupations/roles where women represent less than 25% of the occupational workforce and where most of their time is spent on site or site-related activities, including off-site construction activities contributing to the project.

For example, drafting, environmental or construction management, or professional occupations such as civil engineers. Includes women undertaking and employed in non-traditional traineeships and apprenticeships.

The following link provides a list of occupations where women represent less than 25% of the workforce sourced from the ABS Census data 2021:

Women in Non-Traditional Roles Example Occupations.

(https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-09/Training-Management-Guidelines-Women-in-Non-Traditional-Roles-Example-Occupations-September-2023.pdf)

Note: Women working as traffic controllers are not considered a non-traditional role. Evidence from ISLP projects demonstrates women are not under-represented in this occupation.

More Information

For more information, please contact DoE via email WiC@det.nsw.edu.au.

Further information will be available online at <u>NSW Government Grants and Funding website</u>.

Complaints

For any concerns about your organisation's application, or if you would like the opportunity for feedback regarding your organisation's application, please write to WiC@det.nsw.edu.au within 20 business days of notification of your application's outcome.

If you do not agree with the way INSW / DoE handled the concern/issue, you may wish to contact the NSW Ombudsman via www.ombo.nsw.gov.au.

Should you have concerns in relation to the probity of the process, you can contact the Program's Probity Advisor directly:

Sarah Mullins, Partner

O'Connor Marsden & Associates Pty Ltd

M: 0413 443 374

E: smullins@ocm.net.au

Government Information (Public Access) Act

IIP Grant applicants should be aware information submitted and all related correspondence, attachments and other documents may be made publicly available under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW). Information that is deemed to be commercially sensitive will be withheld.

The Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) makes government information accessible to the public by:

- requiring government agencies to make certain sorts of information freely 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 only when there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

The NSW Government Grant Administration Guidelines (2022) mandates the publication of information about all grants awarded no later than 45 calendar days after the grant agreement takes effect. The publication of program evaluations is also required. This information is published on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder website nsw.gov.au/grants-and-funding.

Disclaimer

INSW and DoE do not guarantee or warrant and do not accept any 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.

INSW and DoE recommend 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.

Funding assistance provided through the IIP Grant is subject to funds being available. INSW and DoE reserve the right to make changes to the IIP Grant to ensure it meets the objectives outlined in these Guidelines and provides equitable funding support to potential funding recipients.

These Guidelines are subject to change at any time at the discretion of INSW and DoE.

© State of NSW through INSW. The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing in December 2023. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the DoE/INSW or the user's independent adviser.