



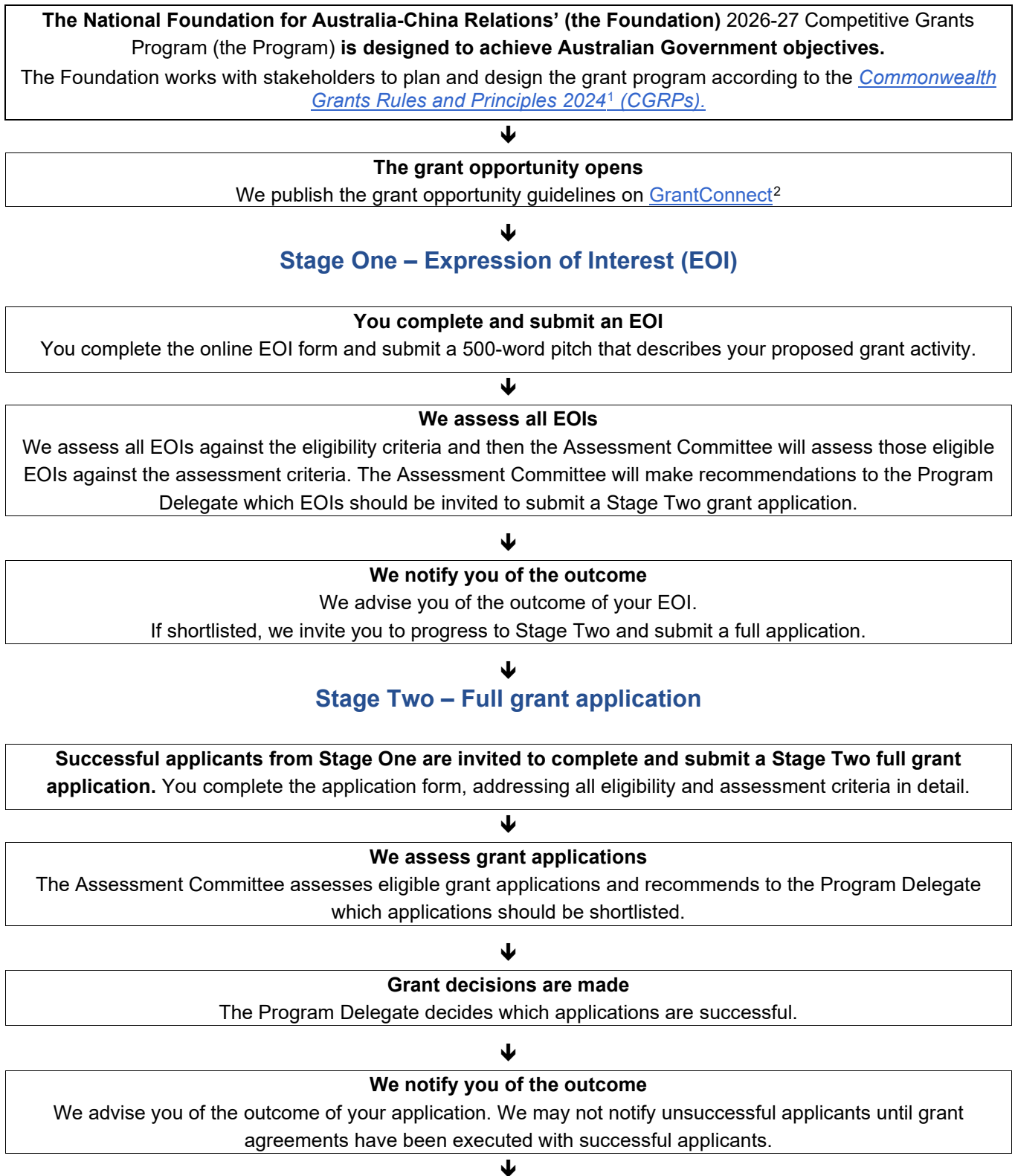
## Grant Opportunity Guidelines for the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations 2026-27 Competitive Grants Program

<b>Opening date (Stage One EOI):</b>	<b>Tuesday 5 May 2026</b>
<b>Closing date and time:</b>	<b>Tuesday 26 May 2026 by 12:00pm AEST (midday)</b>
<b>Commonwealth policy entity:</b>	<b>Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)</b>
<b>Administering entity:</b>	<b>Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)</b>
<b>Enquiries:</b>	<p>If you have any questions, email <a href="mailto:grants@australiachinafoundation.org.au">grants@australiachinafoundation.org.au</a></p> <p>Questions on the EOI process should be sent no later than 10:00am AEST Thursday 21 May 2026</p>
<b>Date grant opportunity guidelines released:</b>	<b>Tuesday 21 April 2026</b>
<b>Type of grant opportunity:</b>	<p>Open competitive (Stage One)</p> <p>Targeted competitive (Stage Two)</p>

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>National Foundation for Australia-China Relations 2026-27 Grants Program processes..</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>About the grant program.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Grant amount and grant period .....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1	Grants available .....	6
3.2	Grant period .....	6
<b>4</b>	<b>Eligibility criteria .....</b>	<b>6</b>
4.1	Who is eligible to apply for a grant?.....	6
4.2	Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?.....	7
4.3	What qualifications, skills or checks are required?.....	7
<b>5</b>	<b>What the grant money can be used for.....</b>	<b>7</b>
5.1	Eligible grant activities .....	7
5.2	Eligible locations .....	8
5.3	Eligible expenditure.....	8
5.4	What the grant money cannot be used for.....	8
<b>6</b>	<b>Assessment Criteria .....</b>	<b>9</b>
6.1	Stage One - Expression of Interest (EOI).....	9
6.2	Stage Two - Full Grant Application .....	9
<b>7</b>	<b>How to apply.....</b>	<b>11</b>
7.1	Timing of grant opportunity processes.....	12
7.2	Questions during the application process.....	12
<b>8</b>	<b>The grant selection process .....</b>	<b>13</b>
8.1	Assessment of grant applications .....	13
8.2	Value with relevant money.....	13
8.3	Who will assess applications? .....	13
8.4	Who will approve grants?.....	13
<b>9</b>	<b>Notification of application outcomes.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Successful grant applications .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Announcement of grants .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>How we monitor your grant activity.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Probity.....</b>	<b>18</b>
13.1	Enquiries and feedback .....	18
13.2	Conflict of interest .....	18
13.3	Privacy .....	19
13.4	Confidential information .....	20
13.5	Freedom of information.....	20
<b>14</b>	<b>Glossary.....</b>	<b>22</b>

# 1 National Foundation for Australia-China Relations 2026-27 Grants Program processes



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2024L00854/latest/versions>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.grants.gov.au/>

**We enter into a grant agreement**

We will enter into a grant agreement with you if you have been successful.



**Delivery of grant**

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. We manage the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making payments.



**Evaluation of the grant**

We evaluate the progress and outcomes of your specific grant activity based on the information you provide to us and information we collect from various sources.

## 1.1 Introduction

These grant opportunity guidelines contain information for the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations' (the Foundation) 2026-27 Competitive Grant Program (the Program).

You must read these grant opportunity guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant program/grant opportunity
- the eligibility and assessment criteria and how to apply
- how the two-stage grant applications are considered and selected
- how grantees are notified and receive grant payments
- how grantees will be monitored and evaluated
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the grant opportunity.

We administer the grant program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024](#)<sup>3</sup> (CGRPs).

## 2 About the grant program

The **2026-27 Competitive Grant Program** (the Program) will run over 4 financial years from FY2026-27 to FY2029-30. The Foundation's priority objectives are to:

- Strengthen risk-informed engagement and practical cooperation between Australia and China, in Australia's national interests
- Strengthen Australia's resilience as a multicultural democracy in which Chinese-Australian communities thrive.

The Foundation's **intended outcomes** for the Program are to:

- build Australian knowledge of, and capability to, engage mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and/or Taiwan in our national interest, and develop a sovereign national China capability pipeline spanning schools, universities, and the workforce, across industry and government.
- facilitate dialogue and exchange that increases mutual understanding in priority areas that further Australia's national interest, including with counterpart organisations in mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and/or Taiwan
- support key Australian industry sectors to engage markets in mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and/or Taiwan
- further climate change, net zero, decarbonisation, dryland farming, climate smart agriculture, green economy, the environment and clean energy transition outcomes
- support collaboration and exchange in health, ageing and medical technology (medtech)
- showcase Australian excellence in, and enhance people-to-people links through, exchanges in arts and culture, sports, education, academia, sustainable aviation and tourism
- engage Chinese-Australians through:
  - a. strengthening civic participation and supporting understanding of Australia's foreign policy drivers
  - b. engaging and empowering Chinese-Australian leaders
  - c. promoting recognition of Chinese-Australian contributions and
  - d. promoting inclusion of Chinese-Australian communities

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2024L00854/latest/text>

- enhance understanding of modern and multicultural Australia by international students from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and/or Taiwan and connect emerging leaders in this cohort to Australian society, institutions or industry
- promote media and public communication activities on the above.

## 2.1 About the Foundation

The National Foundation for Australia-China Relations is an Australian Government initiative. We are a national platform to promote and coordinate enhanced cooperation between Australia and China in support of Australia's national interests.

Further information on the Program, including descriptions of previous grant projects, is available at: [National Foundation for Australia-China Relations](#).

## 3 Grant amount and grant period

### 3.1 Grants available

For this grant opportunity \$20.6 million is available over financial 4 years (FY2026-27 to FY2029-30), with up to \$6.9 million available per year.

It is anticipated most grants will be valued between \$100,000 and \$400,000, depending on the scope of the grant activity and its complexity. This does not preclude some grants being more or less than this amount. Final grant funding amounts are determined by the Program Delegate.

### 3.2 Grant period

The maximum grant project period is 4 financial years, although we anticipate most grants will be for a shorter duration. The minimum grant period is one year.

## 4 Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all the eligibility criteria.

### 4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible you must be one of the following entity types:

- a company incorporated in Australia
- a company incorporated by guarantee
- an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust
- an incorporated association
- a partnership
- a registered charity or not-for-profit organisation
- a publicly funded research organisation
- an Australian local government body
- an Australian state or territory government body
- an Australian statutory authority
- a Corporate Commonwealth Entity
- an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Corporation registered under the [Corporations \(Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander\) Act 2006](#).

You must also:

- have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- have an account with an Australian financial institution
- be a legal entity with the capacity to enter into a legally binding agreement
- be located in Australia or mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and/or Taiwan.

## 4.2 Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- an organisation not included in section 4.1
- a previous grantee who has failed to provide a full and proper acquittal of an earlier DFAT grant
- an organisation, or your project partner is an organisation, included on the [National Redress Scheme's website](#)<sup>4</sup> on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme'
- an unincorporated association
- an organisation (employer of 100 or more employees) that has not complied with the [Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012](#)<sup>5</sup>.

## 4.3 What qualifications, skills or checks are required?

If you are successful, relevant personnel working on the grant activity may be required to maintain the following checks:

- Working with Vulnerable People registration
- Working with Children check.

# 5 What the grant money can be used for

## 5.1 Eligible grant activities

To be eligible your grant activity must:

- be consistent with the objectives and intended outcomes as outlined in Section 2 'About the Grant Program';
- and include eligible activities and eligible expenditure.

Eligible activities must directly relate to the project and can include:

- meetings, conferences and workshops
- exchanges and secondments of personnel between Australia and mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and/or Taiwan
- major events, performances and forums
- market research
- fellowships or scholarships
- community engagement
- virtual or real tours and exhibitions
- communications activities, or
- other activities determined as eligible by the Program Delegate.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nationalredress.gov.au/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A03332/latest/text>

## 5.2 Eligible locations

Your grant can include activities at different locations, provided they are in Australia or mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and/or Taiwan.

## 5.3 Eligible expenditure

You can only spend the grant on eligible expenditure you have incurred on eligible grant activities or agreed project activities which have been agreed to in the grant agreement.

Eligible expenditure items include:

- reasonable air, land or sea travel costs and accommodation. As an example, reasonable travel costs would include economy international flights and 3 or 4 star accommodation
- labour costs of Australian employees employed to directly deliver the grant project (but not ongoing salaries or labour costs related to matters other than delivering the grant activity)
- interpretation and translation
- communications, graphic design, photography, advertising and promotion
- publications and printed material
- production costs (such as freight or artists' fees)
- equipment or venue hire for project activities
- other activities determined as eligible by the Program Delegate.

We may ask you to provide cost estimations in your application. We may also ask you to verify actual costs, including through quotes, invoices and receipts.

You must incur the expenditure on your grant activities between the start date and end date of your grant agreement for it to be eligible.

If you receive, or will receive, Commonwealth funding from another source, you must detail this in your application.

The Program Delegate makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure.

## 5.4 What the grant money cannot be used for

You cannot use the grant for the following activities/expenditures:

- capital expenditure, including purchase of real estate and vehicles
- purchase of equipment (e.g., technical equipment, musical instruments, computers, videos)
- the covering of retrospective costs or recurrent funding of activities
- activities which are already commercially viable in their own right
- activities that provide direct commercial advantage to the applicant (e.g., promotion of own business or investment attraction)
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation
- subsidy of general ongoing administration of an organisation such as electricity, phone, rent, honorariums or administrative charges levied by the applicant's organisation
- study tours or activities undertaken by schools where travel by a significant number of students is the principal element of the proposal, or
- completed projects.

## 6 Assessment Criteria

### 6.1 Stage One - Expression of Interest (EOI)

The selection process will occur in two stages. In **Stage One** applicants must submit a **500-word Expression of Interest (EOI)** in the [SmartyGrants portal](#). Eligible EOIs will be assessed by the Assessment Committee based on the assessment criteria (1) to (5) below. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit a full grant application.

Your 500-word EOI must:

- (1) Provide a clear and concise description of the proposed grant activity (i.e., what you plan to do)
- (2) Demonstrate how your proposed activity will advance Australia's national interest, the Foundation's priority objectives and intended outcomes
- (3) Demonstrate your organisation's ability to deliver the activity effectively and responsibly
- (4) Demonstrate how you will maximise the reach, influence and impact of the activity
- (5) Demonstrate how the activity will deliver value beyond the life of the grant.

If you are invited to submit an application under Stage Two, you will be asked to provide more detailed responses and provide evidence to support your application. In some cases, you may receive feedback from the Foundation to be addressed in the Stage Two application.

Applicants who are not shortlisted at the EOI stage will be notified by email. Feedback will not be provided.

### 6.2 Stage Two - Full Grant Application

Applications for **Stage Two** are by invitation only. Only applicants shortlisted by the Assessment Committee in Stage One will be able to submit a Stage Two application.

If invited to submit an application under **Stage Two**, your grant application must provide further detail of your proposed grant activity by addressing the five assessment criterions outlined below. Your application should also address any feedback received through the EOI process.

We will assess your application based on the weighting given to each criterion outlined below and rank it against other applications.

The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the project size, complexity, and grant amount request.

Each criterion will be assessed in line with the weightings outlined below.

#### **Assessment Criterion 1 (25%): Activity Overview (250 words)**

Provide a clear and concise description of the proposed grant activity (i.e. what you plan to do), including:

- Project summary and purpose
- Key activities to be undertaken
- Target audience
- Clear and measurable objectives
- Number of participants and proposed partners/stakeholders/delegates
- Geographic focus (Australia and/or mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau or Taiwan)
- Staffing and resourcing - how the activity will be managed and delivered, including whether the project team reflects the diversity of modern Australia. For example, gender balance of the grant delivery team and the inclusion of Chinese-Australians and/or people of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Activities that may be viewed favourably include those that:

- Demonstrate nation-wide benefit, including outcomes that extend beyond a single location in Australia
- Involve mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and/or Taiwan, including two-way travel and engagement
- Engage Chinese-Australian communities, Australian media organisations, build China literacy and capability and/or showcase modern and multicultural Australia, including First Nations People.
- Demonstrate co-funding commitment (subject to a decision by the Program Delegate on the suitability of proposed financial partners).

### **Assessment Criterion 2 (25%): Contribution to Australia's national interests, including Foundation objectives and intended outcomes (250 words)**

Demonstrate how your proposed activity will:

- Advance Australia's national interests
- Advance the Foundation's priority objectives:
  - Strengthen risk-informed engagement and practical cooperation with China in Australia's national interest
  - Strengthen Australia's resilience as a multicultural democracy in which Chinese-Australian communities thrive
- Advance one or more of the intended outcomes for the Program (Section 2).

### **Assessment Criterion 3 (20%): Delivery capability and risk management (150 words)**

Demonstrate your organisation's ability to deliver the activity effectively and responsibly, including:

- Relevant organisational track record and experience
- Skills, experience and diversity of proposed project team
- Governance, financial management and risk management frameworks
- Capacity to manage political, delivery, financial, reputational and foreign interference risks
- Proposed delivery partners and their roles
- Ability to demonstrate outcomes using measurable qualitative and quantitative data.

### **Assessment Criterion 4 (20%): Reach, influence and impact (150 words)**

Demonstrate how you will maximise the reach, influence and impact of the activity, including through:

- Partnerships, financial resilience and any co-funding or in-kind support
- Use of branding opportunities and partner networks to amplify reach
- Communications, marketing and media strategies, including intended audiences, platforms and key messages
- Audience engagement, accessibility and inclusivity
- Evaluation and measurement of impact, including clear KPIs, data collection methods, and reporting processes
- Community and stakeholder involvement, including co-design or decision-making where appropriate.

### **Assessment Criterion 5 (10%): Sustainability and enduring impact (150 words)**

Demonstrate how the activity will deliver value beyond the life of the grant, including:

- Plans for sustainability or continuation beyond the grant term
- Ability to create enduring outcomes, such as long-term institutional linkages, sectoral capability building or scalable models
- Scenario planning for continuation, adaptation or long-term outcomes.

## 7 How to apply

Before applying, you must read and understand these grant opportunity guidelines.

This document may be found at [GrantConnect](#)<sup>6</sup>. GrantConnect is the authoritative source for grants information. Any alterations and addenda<sup>7</sup> will be published on GrantConnect and registering on this website means you will be automatically notified of any changes to the guidelines.

To submit an EOI, you must:

- complete your online **Stage One** EOI form on the [SmartGrants portal](#)
- submit your **Stage One** EOI application via the SmartyGrants portal by 12:00pm (midday) Australian Eastern Standard Time on 26 May 2026.

To submit a Stage Two full grant application, you must:

- be invited on the week of 15 June 2026 to submit a **Stage Two** full application
- provide all the information requested
- respond to feedback received through the Stage One EOI process
- attach letters of support from two independent referees (referees cannot be Foundation or DFAT employees or Foundation Advisory Board members)
- submit your **Stage Two** application through the SmartyGrants portal by 12:00pm (midday) Australian Eastern Standard Time on 10 July 2026.

You can view and print a copy of your submitted application from the SmartyGrants portal, for your own records.

You are responsible for making sure your submission is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the [Criminal Code Act 1995 \(Cth\)](#)<sup>8</sup> and the Department will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

### **You cannot change your submission after the closing date and time.**

If we find an error or information that is missing, we may ask for clarification or additional information from.

However, we can refuse to accept any additional information that would change your submission after the specified closing time. The acceptance of any additional information provided after the submission date is at the discretion of the Program Delegate.

You should keep a copy of your submissions and any supporting documents.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.grants.gov.au/>

<sup>7</sup> Alterations and addenda include but are not limited to: corrections to currently published documents, changes to close times for applications, Questions and Answers (Q&A) documents and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A04868/latest/text>

## 7.1 Timing of grant opportunity processes

You must submit an application between the published opening and closing dates. We cannot accept late applications.

If you are successfully shortlisted, you should plan to commence your grant activity no earlier than March 2027 and the expected completion date is as specified in your application.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Applications round opens on GrantConnect	Open: Tues 05 May 2026, 8:00am AEST Close: Tues 26 May 2026, 12:00pm midday AEST
Assessment of Stage One EOI applications	3 weeks
Notification of Stage One Outcomes	Week of 15 June 2026 <i>All Stage One EOI applicants will receive an outcome notification.</i>
Stage Two application round opens	Open: Tues 16 June 2026, 8:00am AEST
Stage Two preparation and submission period for invited full grant applications	4 weeks
Stage Two full applications deadline	Close: Fri 10 July 2026, 12:00pm midday AEST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assessment of applications, including conducting due diligence</li> <li>▪ Approval of outcomes of selection process</li> <li>▪ Notification to applicants</li> </ul>	<p>Approximately 18 weeks following closing date for submission of full applications</p> <p><i>We may not notify Stage Two applicants who are unsuccessful until agreements have been executed with shortlisted applicants.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Negotiations and full execution of grant agreements</li> </ul>	Approximately 8 weeks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Earliest start date of the grant activity</li> </ul>	March 2027
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grant funding disbursed in accordance with the grant agreement</li> </ul>	After the grant agreement is fully executed, with funding disbursed from February 2027
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Completion date of grant activity or agreement</li> </ul>	As specified in the grant agreement

## 7.2 Questions during the grant applications process

If you have any questions for the Stage One EOI process, email [grants@australiachinafoundation.org.au](mailto:grants@australiachinafoundation.org.au) before 10:00am AEST Thursday 21 May 2026.

## 8 The grant selection process

### 8.1 Assessment of grant applications

#### **Stage One: Expressions of Interest (EOI)**

The Program is an open, competitive grants process. All applications received under the Stage One EOI process are first reviewed against the eligibility criteria. Only eligible applications will proceed to assessment. If eligible, the EOI will be assessed against the Stage One EOI assessment criteria (see Section 6.1) by the Assessment Committee. We will consider your application on its merits, based on:

- How well it meets the assessment criteria
- How it compares with other applications
- Value with money considerations

We will then make a recommendation to the Program Delegate about which applications should be invited to apply for a grant through the Stage Two process. The Program Delegate decides which EOIs will proceed to Stage Two.

#### **Stage Two: Full Grant Application**

We will assess your Stage Two application against the assessment criteria (see Section 6.2 – Grant application Stage Two).

The Assessment Committee will make recommendations to the Program Delegate. Decisions of the Program Delegate are final.

### 8.2 Value with relevant money

When assessing whether the application represents value with money, we will have regard to:

- the relative value of the grant sought
- how the proposed grant project will target groups or individuals, such as leveraging existing processes and technologies, or demonstrating innovative approaches
- whether the application outlines effective risk management processes to minimise potential waste of money
- whether the application includes mechanisms for ongoing monitoring and management of grant activities
- the extent to which the proposed grant project leverages additional funding (such as cash and in-kind contributions).

### 8.3 Who will assess applications?

An Assessment Committee comprising Foundation staff will assess each application on its merits. The committee may seek advice from other sources, including the Foundation Advisory Board, DFAT staff and other government and expert private sector assessors, even if these sources are not nominated by you as referees.

The Assessment Committee will make recommendations to the Program Delegate.

### 8.4 Who will approve grants?

The Program Delegate is the Chief Executive Officer of the Foundation. The Program Delegate will decide which grants to approve considering the availability of grants funds for the purpose of the grant program.

The Program Delegate may consult the Foundation Advisory Board, DFAT staff and other government and expert private sector assessors, even if these sources are not nominated by you as referees.

The Program Delegate's decision is final in all matters, including:

- the shortlisting of applications
- 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 made by the Program Delegate.

## 9 Notification of application outcomes

We will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing. If you are successful, we will advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

### 9.1 Feedback on your application

Due to the high volume of applications received, the Foundation is unable to provide feedback on all submissions. Some Stage Two full applications that are assessed as highly rated but are not selected for funding may be placed on a reserve list. Only Stage Two applicants who receive a reserve list notification may request feedback.

## 10 Successful grant applications

### 10.1 The grant agreement

If your application is successful, we will require you to enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. We use a grant agreement based on a Department of Finance template that has been specifically tailored to meet Foundation requirements.

Each agreement has general terms and conditions that cannot be changed. We must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments, and we will make payments as soon as practical after signature in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement. We are not responsible for any of your expenditure until a grant agreement is executed. If you start your grant activities and/or make any financial commitments or undertakings before you have an executed grant agreement, you do so at your own risk.

Your grant agreement may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the Program Delegate. We will identify these in the agreement.

Where a grantee fails to meet the obligations of the grant agreement, the Foundation may withhold or suspend the funding to the grantee, and/or require the grantee to repay all or part of the grant and/or terminate the grant agreement. No compensation is payable by the Foundation for termination in these circumstances.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement.

### 10.2 Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You must comply with all relevant laws and regulations in relation to your grant activity.

In the Standard Grant Agreement, grantees must acknowledge that persons who undertake, or who have an arrangement to undertake certain activities on behalf of a foreign principal for the purpose of political or governmental influence are required to register under the Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act (2018). It is an offence to not register if you are required to do so, and penalties apply. Further information about the scheme is accessible at: [www.ag.gov.au/transparency](http://www.ag.gov.au/transparency).

Grantees should also take into account the Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector (see [Guidelines to counter foreign interference in the Australian university sector – Department of Education, Australian Government](#)).

Where grant activities may involve research collaboration with foreign entities, some provisions relating to Australia's export controls regime may apply to you. It is your responsibility to consider any implications of the relevant legislation and ensure you have appropriate risk management controls in place. You should refer to [www.defence.gov.au/ExportControls/Legislation.asp](http://www.defence.gov.au/ExportControls/Legislation.asp) for further information including on the Defence Trade Controls Amendment Act 2024.

Where appropriate, applicants must provide details of intellectual property (IP) arrangements in their full applications. This includes both the use of IP in the grant activity and the proposed ownership rights to IP generated by the grant activity as well as strategies for protecting Australia's interests. Where IP is likely to be generated by the grant activity, successful applicants are required to conclude protocols or contracts with their partners including in Australia and mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and/or Taiwan on the management of IP issues. Grantees should approach IP negotiations in line with the principles outlined on [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au).

### 10.3 How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount to be paid
- any in-kind contributions you will make
- whether the payment will be upfront or in instalments
- any financial contribution provided by a third party

If you incur extra costs under the agreement, you will need to meet them yourself.

The Program Delegate may decide on an amount of grant funding that is the same, less or more than the amount you applied for.

We may pay up to 100 per cent of the grant on execution of the grant agreement, commence funding in a future financial year, or make payments in instalments subject to timelines outlined in the grant agreement. You will be required to provide milestone reporting including on how you spent the grant funds. In cases where we pay in instalments, subsequent payments are subject to satisfactory progress on agreed milestones.

### 10.4 Grants payments and GST

This grant is Goods and Services Tax (GST) exclusive.

We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](#). We do not provide advice on your particular taxation circumstances.

## 11 Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website 21 calendar days after the date of effect as required by Section 5.4 of the [CGRPs](#)<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2024L00854/latest/text>

## 12 How we monitor your grant activity

### 12.1 Keeping us informed

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your grant activity or organisation.

We need to know of any key changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your grant, carry on business and pay debts due.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- name (including any change to legal entity status of the grantee or ABN)
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details
- partners for the grant activity in any way involved in its delivery
- new partnerships or sponsorship arrangements
- your organisation's governance arrangements/composition.

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement, you must contact us immediately.

You must notify us of events relating to your grant and if requested by the Foundation, facilitate the attendance of portfolio Ministers, Foundation staff, diplomatic officials or Australian Government representatives overseas.

### 12.2 Reporting

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement.

In addition to formal reports required in the grant agreement, we will expect you to report to us on a regular and informal basis on:

- progress against agreed grant activity milestones and outcomes, including any emerging risks
- contributions of participants directly related to the grant activity
- expenditure to date and forecast
- any changes to partners involved in any way in delivery of the grant activity, including new partners.

We will monitor progress by assessing reports you submit and may conduct site visits or request records to confirm details if necessary. Occasionally we may need to re-examine claims, seek further information, or request an independent and/or external audit of claims and payments.

You must discuss any reporting delays with us as soon as you become aware of them.

You will be required to acquit all funds and deliver all reporting required under the grant agreement during the period of your grant agreement.

#### **Progress reports**

Formal progress reports required from you will be specified in the grant agreement and must:

- include evidence of your progress towards completion of agreed activities and outcomes
- show the total eligible expenditure incurred to date
- identify how risks are being mitigated, as well as any new or emerging risks and how they will be managed

- specify any changes to partners involved in any way in delivering the grant activity, including new partners
- be submitted by the report due date (you can submit reports ahead of time if relevant).

We will only make grant milestone payments when we receive satisfactory progress reports.

You must discuss any reporting delays with us as soon as you become aware of them.

### **Ad-hoc reports**

We may ask you for ad-hoc reports on your grant. This may be to provide an update on progress, or any significant delays or difficulties in completing the grant activity.

### **Final report**

Final reports must:

- identify if and how intended objectives, outcomes have been achieved, and how Australia's national interests have been furthered
- include agreed evidence as specified in the grant agreement
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred
- be submitted in the format provided in the grant agreement.

## **12.3 Financial declaration**

We may ask you to provide a statutory declaration that the grant money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement and to report on any underspends of the grant money.

## **12.4 Grant agreement variations**

We recognise that unexpected events may affect your progress. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your grant agreement. An extension for up to six months may be requested, provided a request is submitted before the end date specified in your grant agreement. You may request a variation to your grant agreement by emailing the relevant grant manager before the end date in your grant agreement.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on provisions in the grant agreement and the likely impact on achieving outcomes.

## **12.5 Compliance visits**

We may visit you during, or at the completion of, your grant activity to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

## **12.6 Record keeping**

We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement.

## **12.7 Evaluation**

We will evaluate the grant and the grant program to measure how well the intended outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may contact you and will use information from your application, reports and interviews to assist with this evaluation. The evaluation may include views provided by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, other government agencies or Australian diplomatic missions or representative offices overseas.

## 12.8 Acknowledgement

Effective branding of your grant is an important component of the Program. Subject to any specific advice provided by your grant manager or as specified in your grant agreement, the Foundation's logo must be used on all materials related to grant activities in accordance with the Foundation's brand guidelines.

Any public statements about your grant activity must include the following acknowledgement, for example:

*'This activity received grant funding from the Australian Government's National Foundation for Australia-China Relations.'*

## 13 Probity

We will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, is conducted according to the published grant opportunity guidelines, is consistent with the CGRPs and incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud and corruption, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct.

You must ensure that you know who you are collaborating with by undertaking appropriate due diligence on all partners and personnel participating in the grant activity. You should be prepared to demonstrate how you will manage and mitigate any identified risks including security, ethical, legal and reputational risks. Your demonstrated ability to proactively manage risk is an important part of your application.

The Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme provides the public with visibility of the nature, level and extent of foreign influence on Australia's government and politics. It is recommended that you review obligations and responsibilities under the scheme at [Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme<sup>10</sup>](#) before confirming project partners.

You should be aware of your obligations under the [National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022<sup>11</sup>](#), noting that under the Act grantees will generally be considered 'contracted service providers' [see [NACC fact sheets<sup>12</sup>](#)].

### 13.1 Enquiries and feedback

Any questions you have about the Program should be sent to [grants@australiachinafoundation.org.au](mailto:grants@australiachinafoundation.org.au). Any complaints must be provided in writing.

If you do not agree with the way the Foundation has handled your complaint, you may submit a complaint to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman<sup>13</sup>](#). The Ombudsman will not usually consider a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the Foundation or the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072

Website: [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)

### 13.2 Conflict of interest

Any conflicts of interest, or perceived conflicts of interest, can affect the performance of the Program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if Foundation staff, a member of the Foundation's Advisory Board, and/or you or any of your personnel, including sub-contractors have a:

- professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who can influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer or member of a panel

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ag.gov.au/integrity/foreign-influence-transparency-scheme>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2022A00088/latest/text>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.nacc.gov.au/resource-centre/nacc-fact-sheets>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

- relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently or
- relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program.

You will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interest or that, to the best of your knowledge, there are no conflicts of interest.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform the Foundation in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be handled as set out in the [Australian Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)](#)<sup>14</sup> of the [Public Service Act 1999](#)<sup>15</sup> and section 29 (duty to disclose interests) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest. The Foundation's conflict of interest policy is consistent and aligns with Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade policy.

### 13.3 Privacy

We treat your personal information according to the [Privacy Act 1988](#)<sup>16</sup> and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#)<sup>17</sup>. This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- who we give your personal information to.

'Personal information' means information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:

- (a) whether the information or opinion is true or not and
- (b) whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.

Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else for the primary purpose for which it was collected, unless an exemption under the Australian Privacy Principles applies.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information about grant applicants and grant recipients under this grant opportunity in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes disclosing grant information on GrantConnect as required for reporting purposes and giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

We may share the information you give us with other Commonwealth entities for purposes including government administration, research or service delivery, according to Australian laws.

As part of your application, you declare that you will comply with the Privacy Act and the Australian Privacy Principles and that you will impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and subcontractors that you engage to assist with the activity, in respect of personal information you collect, use, store, or disclose in connection with the activity. Accordingly, you must not do anything, which if done by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade would breach an Australian Privacy Principle as defined in the Privacy Act.

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.apsc.gov.au/working-aps/integrity/integrity-resources/code-of-conduct>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A00538/latest/versions>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A03712/latest/text>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/australian-privacy-principles>

### 13.4 Confidential information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to disclose to any person, other than Foundation staff, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you; or your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will keep any information in connection with the grant agreement confidential to the extent that it meets all of the following three conditions:

1. you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
2. the information is commercially sensitive
3. revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

- the Advisory Board and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively
- employees and contractors of our department so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery
- other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, and
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

The grant agreement may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the grant agreement.

### 13.5 Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about this grant opportunity, are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#)<sup>18</sup> (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A02562/latest/versions>

By mail: Freedom of Information Coordinator  
The Director, Freedom of Information Section, Regulatory and  
Legal Policy Division  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
R.G. Casey Building, John McEwen Crescent  
BARTON ACT 0221

By email: [foi@dfat.gov.au](mailto:foi@dfat.gov.au)

## 14 Glossary

Term	Definition
accountable authority	see subsection 12(2) of the <a href="#">Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</a> <sup>19</sup> (PGPA Act).
administering entity	when an entity that is not responsible for the policy, is responsible for the administration of part or all of the grant administration processes.
assessment criteria	are the specified principles or standards, against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive grant opportunity, to determine application rankings.
commencement date	the expected start date for the grant activity.
Commonwealth entity	a Department of State, or a Parliamentary Department, or a listed entity or a body corporate established by a law of the Commonwealth. See subsections 10(1) and (2) of the PGPA Act
<a href="#">Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024 (CGRPs)</a> <sup>20</sup>	establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this overarching framework, non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration.
completion date	the expected date that the grant activity must be completed and the grant spent by.
contracted service provider	a person who is a party to a Commonwealth contract or is a party to a subcontract with a contracted service provider and is responsible for the provision of goods or services under contract, either directly or indirectly.
co-sponsoring entity	when two or more entities are responsible for the policy and the appropriation for outcomes associated with it.
date of effect	can be the date on which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date. Where there is no grant agreement, entities must publish information on individual grants as soon as practicable.
decision maker	the person who makes a decision to award a grant.
eligibility criteria	refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Eligibility criteria should be developed to enable objective validation and are either 'met' or 'not met'. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2013A00123/latest/text>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2024L00854/latest/text>

Term	Definition
grant	<p>for the purposes of the CGRPs, a 'grant' is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>under which relevant money<sup>21</sup> or other <a href="#">Consolidated Revenue Fund</a><sup>22</sup> (CRF) money<sup>23</sup> is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth and</li> <li>which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives.</li> </ol>
grant activity/activities	refers to the project/tasks/services that the grantee is required to undertake.
grant agreement	sets out the relationship between the parties to the agreement and specifies the details of the grant.
<a href="#">GrantConnect</a> <sup>24</sup>	is the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRPs.
grant opportunity	refers to the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted and will reflect the relevant grant selection process.
grant program	a 'program' carries its natural meaning and is intended to cover a potentially wide range of related activities aimed at achieving government policy outcomes. A grant program is a group of one or more grant opportunities under a single [entity] Portfolio Budget Statement program.
grantee	the individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant.
National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC)	the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) is an independent Commonwealth agency. It detects, investigates and reports on serious or systemic corruption in the Commonwealth public sector. The Commission operates under the <a href="#">National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022</a> <sup>25</sup> .
PBS Program	described within the entity's <a href="#">Portfolio Budget Statement</a> <sup>26</sup> , PBS programs each link to a single outcome and provide transparency for funding decisions. These high-level PBS programs often comprise a number of lower level, more publicly recognised programs, some of which will be grant programs. A PBS program may have more than one grant program associated with it, and each of these may have one or more grant opportunities.

<sup>21</sup> Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.finance.gov.au/about-us/glossary/pgpa/term-consolidated-revenue-fund-crf>

<sup>23</sup> Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.grants.gov.au/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2022A00088/latest/text>

<sup>26</sup> <https://budget.gov.au/content/pbs/index.htm>

Term	Definition
Program Delegate	the Program Delegate is the Chief Executive Officer of the Foundation. The Program Delegate will decide which grants to approve considering the availability of grants funds for the purpose of the grant program.
selection criteria	comprise eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.
selection process	the method used to select potential grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and/or the assessment criteria.
value with money	<p>value with money in this document refers to ‘value with relevant money’ which is a judgement based on the grant proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations.</p> <p>When administering a grant opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the quality of the project proposal and activities</li> <li>• fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives</li> <li>• that the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government’s outcomes being achieved and</li> <li>• the potential grantee’s relevant experience and performance history.</li> </ul>