



Australian Government

Department of Health

**RURAL GENERAL
PRACTICE GRANTS
(RGPG) PROGRAM**

Guidelines

October 2016

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PART A – PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. Program Overview

These guidelines provide an overview for the administration of the Rural General Practice Grants Program (the Program).

Note: These guidelines may be amended from time-to-time by the Australian Government as the needs of the Program dictate. Amended guidelines are published on the Department of Health’s website.

1.1. Program background

As part of the 2016-17 Budget, the Australian Government committed \$13.1 million in funding under the Program for grants of up to \$300,000 each (GST exclusive), with all amounts listed hereafter in the Guidelines (GST exclusive).

The Program is intended to deliver improved health services through additional infrastructure, increased levels of teaching and training for health practitioners, and more opportunities to deliver ‘healthy living’ education to local communities.

The Program will extend funding availability for the purpose of teaching and training general practitioners, allied health professionals, Aboriginal health practitioners, nurses and nurse practitioners.

The Program will commence with a call for Expressions of Interest (EOI), in which suitable organisations will be identified and subsequently invited to submit a full application.

1.2. Program objectives

The objectives of the Program are to:

- Provide additional infrastructure and appropriate space to enable rural and regional health practitioners to maintain and increase the level of services locally;
- Enable existing health facilities to provide teaching and training opportunities for a range of health professionals within the practice; and
- Enable existing health facilities to provide an environment for patient education to increase health literacy within the community.

1.3. Program outcomes

Expected outcomes for the Program include:

- Additional infrastructure for health practitioners to deliver increased health services to rural and regional communities;
- Increased opportunities to provide teaching and training opportunities for health practitioners; and
- Increased opportunities to promote ‘healthy living’ within the community.

1.4. Funding and Co-contribution

The Australian Government has committed up to \$13.1 million over two years for the Program commencing in 2016-17. Funds may also be used for procurement of activities directly related to delivery of the Program, such as evaluation of Program outcomes.

A maximum amount of \$300,000 per application is available. The funds will be allocated on a co-contribution basis with funding recipients required to **at least** match the amount of Australian Government funding. For example, if the grant application is for \$300,000 the funding recipient must contribute funds of **at least** \$300,000 to a total of **at least** \$600,000. The department may, at its discretion, reduce the amount of grant funding provided to the funding recipient. The department will negotiate the funding amounts with successful applicants.

Upon completion of the infrastructure project, the funding agreement will require the infrastructure to be used, consistent with the Program objectives, for a period of three years, known as the Designated Use Period. Funding recipients must operate the health facility for three years upon completion of the works and will require tenure for the entire time. While the use of the premises must continue, the ownership of the premises may change hands during these periods (subject to the department's consent).

The department reserves the right to terminate the funding agreement and request repayment of funds if the funding recipient cannot meet this requirement.

There may be further specific conditions attached to the funding approval required as a result of the assessment process or that are imposed by the Delegate. These will be identified in the offer of funding or during funding agreement negotiations.

Taxation

Applicants are advised to carefully consider the likely taxation treatment of any grant funding provided by the Australian Government under this Program prior to submitting an application.

As a general principle, grant funds such as that available under this Program will be assessable as income in the hands of a funding recipient where grant funds are received in relation to the carrying on of a business.

For general guidance on the taxation treatment of grants funding from the Commonwealth, applicants may wish to refer to the Australian Taxation Office website. For further information, refer to *Appendix 2: Frequently Asked Questions*.

1.5. Eligibility Requirements

Applications for funding **should** be for existing general practices operating from existing premises and must be in areas covered by the [Modified Monash Model](#) classifications MM2 to MM7 only.

The applicant **must** satisfy and provide evidence under the following eligibility criteria:

- be a legal entity with tenure over the proposed property (further information on eligible entities is below);
- be able to contribute an equal or greater financial commitment (further information is provided at Section 1.6);
- confirmation of an eligible MMM classification for the health facility; and
- be an accredited general practice.

Grant recipients will be required to identify outcomes that will strengthen the rural and regional health workforce and improve health service delivery in these communities. Upon completion of the improvements to the health facility, the department will monitor the implementation of the proposed outcomes for a period of three years.

Eligible Entities

Applicants are **not** required to have a prior funding relationship with the department, but **must** be one of the following legal entity types to be eligible for funding under the Program:

- Incorporated association incorporated under Australian State/Territory legislation;
- Incorporated cooperative incorporated under Australian State/Territory legislation;
- Aboriginal corporation incorporated under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*;
- Organisation established through specific Commonwealth or State/Territory legislation;
- Company incorporated under *Corporations Act 2001 (Commonwealth of Australia)*;
- Partnership (see consortia information below);
- Trustee on behalf of a trust;
- Private general practice (including an individual operating a general practice);
- Australian Local Government Body; and
- Australian State / Territory Government.

The department will enter into a funding agreement with the Trustee of a Unit Trust – subject to the department obtaining legal advice that the terms of the Trust Deed are suitable for meeting the obligations of the funding agreement. The Trust Deed must include the following provision or similar: “The Trustee may enter into any arrangement with the Commonwealth which would be of advantage to the Trust Fund and in particular which may provide a grant, subsidy or other benefit”. The department will **not** accept units within a Unit Trust as collateral or security in return for its investment.

Applicants will need to confirm their proposed site’s eligibility against the [Modified Monash Model classification](#) system before submitting an EOI response under stage 1 of the application process.

The department recognises that, where appropriate, some organisations could form consortia to deliver activities. In such cases, a nominated lead entity **must** meet **all** of the above eligibility criteria and submit an application on behalf of the consortium that clearly identifies **all** other consortium members and includes letters of support from each of them. Only the lead entity will enter into and be responsible for any subsequent contractual arrangement with the department.

1.6. What activities and items are eligible for grant funding?

Activities funded under the Program must be consistent with the objectives and outcomes in Section 1.3 and 1.4 of these guidelines.

Program funding may include the following elements as a part of the infrastructure project:

- Direct construction and/or renovation on an existing general practice building, or construction of a new addition where the new building would be functionally related. Costs could cover fit-out, labour and materials for builders, plumbers, electricians, etc.;
- Fit-out for newly constructed extension to an existing general practice as described above;
- Supply and installation of information and communication technology equipment (eg video conferencing equipment) including both hardware and software; for either specialist/allied health case management patient consultations or training/ health literacy purposes. Clinical software should be approved for connection to the *My Health Record* system and have the ability to upload Shared Health Summaries.
- Supply and installation (as appropriate) of essential medical equipment;
- Independent Client Side Project Management fees up to 5% of the total grant funding for the purpose of the project;
- Professional fees for the design of the infrastructure project;
- Professional fees for legal and accountancy advice relating directly to the infrastructure project; or
- Application fees for Development Approval, Building Permits and other building approval expenses.

Relocation or transfer of an existing health facility, (the existing premises) to existing larger or more suitable premises will only be considered where **all** of the following requirements can be demonstrated:

- a) the proposed premises is adjacent to, attached to, or within 5kms from the existing premises, but remains within Modified Monash Model classifications MM2 to MM7;
- b) the same or improved level of accessibility is provided for clients of the existing premises;
- c) the applicant has tenure over the alternative proposed premises by the closing date of the stage 2 ITA; and
- d) an extension / refurbishment of the existing premises to accommodate the additional services set out in the proposal is deemed unachievable or unlikely to be supported by the relevant authorities due to local planning requirements.

Where the total value of a construction/building project is equal to or exceeds \$500,000, a client side project manager may be required by the department and if so must not be an employee or officer of the applicant. A client side project manager is any suitably qualified third party engaged by the funding recipient to supervise all construction work under the project.

1.7. What activities and items are not eligible for grant funding?

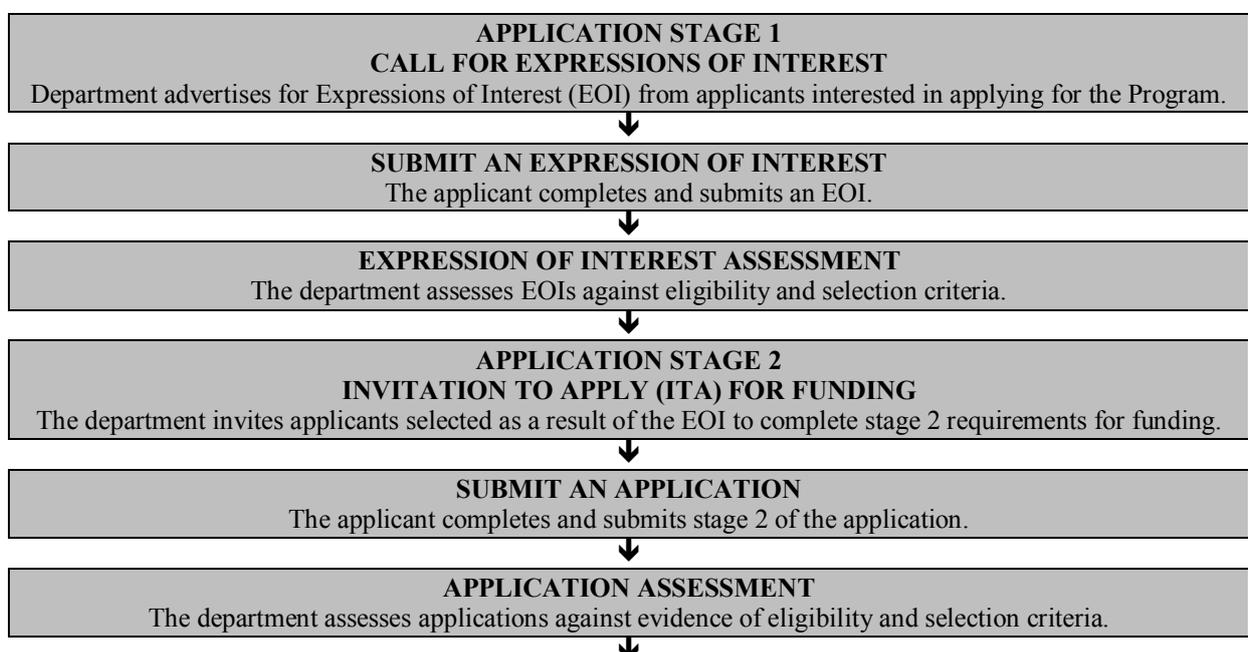
The following types of activities will **not** be funded under the Program:

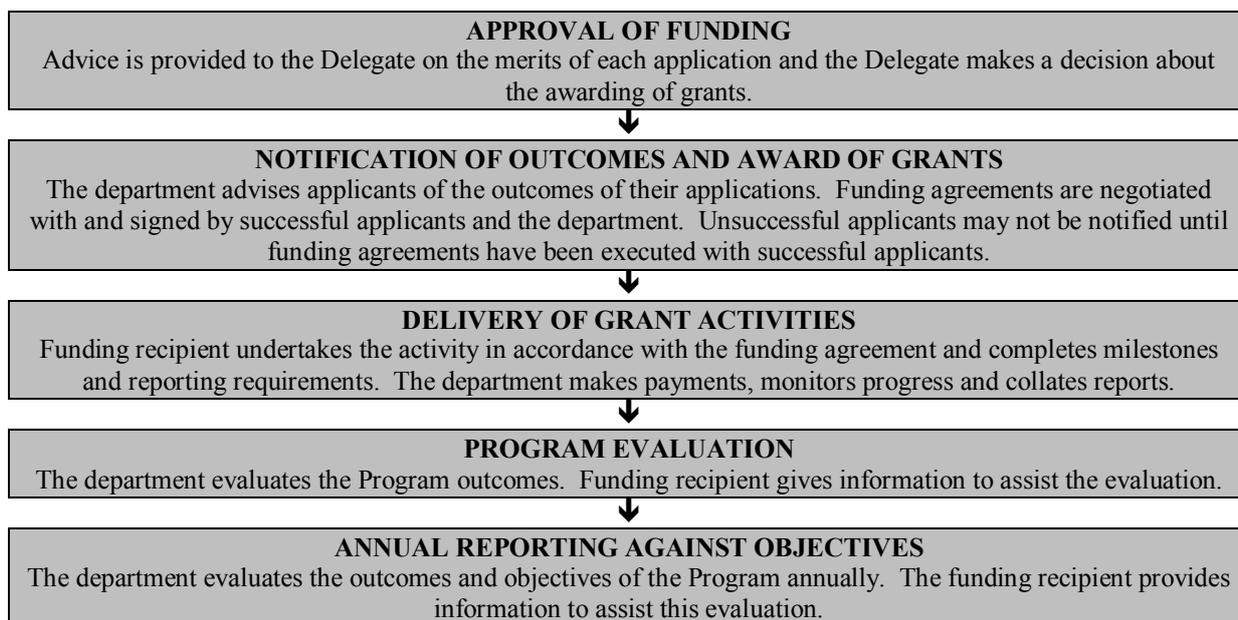
- Constructing new premises to establish a new health facility service or business;
- Constructing a new building to house an existing health facility outside 5km from the existing premises;
- Retrospective items or activities, including an infrastructure project that has been contracted, commenced or completed prior to the execution of a funding agreement;
- Ongoing operating (recurrent) costs (e.g. rent, utilities, salaries, maintenance, insurance);
- Ongoing annual fees for use of computer software;
- The purchase of consumables (other than a consumables pack that may be supplied with equipment on delivery);
- Purchasing or fitting out a mobile medical unit/vehicle;
- The purchase of existing premises, businesses or land;
- Travel and accommodation
- Tax liability associated with the receipt of receiving a grant;
- Extending/fitting out premises for which the applicant does not have tenure as at the date the application is submitted;
- Provision of health services; and
- Purchasing or leasing of motor vehicles.

1.8. Overview of the grant application process

All grant funding rounds will be undertaken in accordance with the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#) (CGRGs) and will be consistent with the outcomes and objectives of the Program.

1.9. Grant Program Process Flowchart





1.10. Funding Round Steps

Funding under the Program will be awarded through a two-stage process. Timing for the process is expected to take approximately five months.

Table 1: Timing of the application process

Activity	Timeframe*
Stage 1 Expression of Interest period	2 weeks
Assessment of stage 1 EOI responses	4 weeks
Approval of outcomes of stage 1 EOI	1 week
Stage 2 ITA application period	5 weeks
Assessment of stage 2 applications	5 weeks
Approval of outcomes of stage 2 ITA	1 week
Award and negotiations of funding agreements	6-7 weeks
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	After execution of funding agreements with successful applicants

* **Timeframes are indicative only.**

The department anticipates that successful applicants will be notified of the outcome of the assessment process by early 2017.

The department may not notify unsuccessful applicants until it has executed funding agreements with the successful applicants.

The grant funding period will commence on execution of the funding agreement, and cease on 30 June 2018. Grants will be paid subject to the achievement of milestones as well as progress reports. Funds are only available over two financial years.

1.11. How to Apply for Funding

Stage One

An initial non-competitive EOI document will be used to gather information on the eligibility of applicants and suitability of their proposed infrastructure projects. Applicants may obtain an EOI pack from the department's [Tenders and Grants webpage](#) from 21 November 2016. EOI responses **must** be completed and submitted to the department within the timeframe specified in the EOI documentation.

The EOI document outlines **stage 1** of the application process and includes the EOI Response Form. The EOI Response Form gathers information about the applicant's proposed activities and contains the selection criteria upon which EOIs will be assessed. Applicants should complete and return the EOI Response Form to the department in accordance with the requirements of the EOI. Submitting an EOI Response does **not** guarantee funding.

Stage One Selection Criteria

The following question will be used to assess the suitability of eligible EOI responses to proceed to Stage 2 of the application process.

Describe your proposed infrastructure project and how you will achieve the outcomes and objectives of the program.

The objectives of the Program are to:

- Provide additional infrastructure and appropriate space to enable rural and regional health practitioners to maintain and increase the level of services locally;
- Enable existing health facilities to provide teaching and training opportunities for a range of health professionals within the practice; and
- Enable existing health facilities to provide an environment for patient education to increase health literacy within the community.

Expected outcomes for the Program include:

- Additional infrastructure for health practitioners to deliver increased health services to rural and regional communities;
- Increased opportunities to provide teaching and training opportunities for health practitioners; and
- Increased opportunities to promote 'healthy living' within the community.

Note: If you are applying to relocate / transfer an existing general practice to an existing larger / more suitable premises, your response should provide reasons. You may be requested to provide additional evidence at the Invitation to Apply stage.

Stage Two

A competitive ITA for funding will be issued to applicants assessed as suitable as a result of the stage 1 EOI process.

The ITA outlines stage 2 of the application process and includes an Application Form. The Application Form gathers additional information about the applicant's proposed activities and contains the selection criteria and additional requirements upon which applications will be assessed. Applicants should complete and return the Application Form along with all necessary attachments to the department in accordance with the ITA requirements. Submitting an application does **not** guarantee funding in the round.

Applications from those invited to apply under stage 2 **must** be for the same project, premises and applicant entity type as this EOI response.

Applicants invited to apply for funding under stage 2 will be required to provide:

- evidence of tenure of the premises that is the subject of the applicant's response to the stage 1 EOI process;
- evidence of ability to **at least** match the amount of Australian Government funding;
- a detailed costing of the infrastructure project that is the subject of the applicant's response to the stage 1 EOI process;
- a letter from the relevant council or land authority providing in-principle support for the construction project (if available at time of submitting application);
- architectural plans / floor plans / sketches of the proposed construction (if available at time of submitting application);
- quotes (if available at time of submitting application);
- building approvals (if available at time of submitting application);
- a risk management plan for the project;
- indicative timelines for the project;
- consortium letters of support (if applicable); and
- Evidence of legal entity status and Trust Deed (if available at time of submitting application).

Tenure

Applicants will be required to provide evidence of tenure (freehold title or a lease) to the proposed premises. In the case of freehold title, acceptable evidence is a title deed and a rates notice or a legally binding contract for unconditional purchase. In the case of leasehold, acceptable evidence is a signed lease and written permission from the land owner for the proposed works to be undertaken.

In the case of leasehold, tenure **must** cover a minimum period of three years following the estimated completion of the infrastructure project to be able to comply with the reporting and monitoring requirements of the Program. The period of tenure set out in the lease is therefore dependent on the duration of the proposed works.

Land Zoning

Applicants will be required to provide evidence, such as a confirmation letter from the local council or other land authority that Designated Use is permitted by the currently applicable zoning of the Property. If not, consent or approval from the relevant authority to the use of the Property for the Designated Use will be required.

Finance

The applicant must provide evidence on the financial viability of the project to the satisfaction of the Australian Government. A successful applicant at stage two of the ITA will be provided with a “approval in principal” letter which will include conditions that must be met before payments will be made by the Australian Government.

Co-contributions could include:

- direct cash injection; or
- loan letter of offer from a financial institution.

Note: In-kind contributions do not count towards the co-contribution.

Consortium letters of support

Applications from consortia should include a letter of support from each member of the consortium other than the lead entity. Each letter of support should include:

- an overview of how the consortium member will work with the lead entity and any other consortium member(s) to support the successful completion of the Activity;
- an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise the consortium member will bring to the consortium;
- the roles/responsibilities the consortium member will undertake, and the resources it will contribute including any co-contribution (if any); and
- details of a nominated management level contact officer.

Stage Two Selection Criteria

Applicants will be required to respond to the following Selection Criteria as part of their application under stage 2:

1. Demonstrate how the infrastructure project will support and strengthen the rural health workforce. Your response should detail the increase in the numbers of and teaching and training opportunities for; health practitioners including medical, allied health professionals, nursing or Aboriginal health practitioners and trainee doctors expected as a result of the additional infrastructure.
2. Demonstrate how the infrastructure project will enable the existing health facilities to provide teaching and training opportunities for a range of health professionals within the practice.
3. Demonstrate how the infrastructure project will improve health service delivery and address unmet healthcare needs in the community, as identified by the local Primary Health Network (PHN) Needs Assessment Report.
4. Demonstrate how the infrastructure project will improve health living in the community.

Where there are insufficient suitable applications received the department may seek to fill any gaps in policy objectives through targeted approaches.

1.12. Applicant responsibilities

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their EOI responses and subsequent application are complete, accurate and submitted to the department in accordance with the specified timeframes and in the manner described in the EOI.

Applicants should contact the department immediately if they discover an error in an application after submission. The department may, at its discretion, request clarification or additional information from applicants that does not alter the substance of an application in response to an omission or error of form. However, the department is not bound to accept any additional information, or requests to change submissions, from applicants after the application closing time.

Applicants may request clarification information from the department until the last date for questions advertised in the EOI or ITA.

2. Assessment of Grant Applications

2.1. How will EOI responses be assessed in stage 1?

An Assessment Committee will be established by the department to assess EOI responses against the Eligibility Criteria and Selection Criteria in the EOI Response Form (stage 1) and shortlist applicants to proceed to stage 2 – The ITA. The Assessment Committee may consist of officers from the department, representatives from State or Territory health departments and/or relevant experts. External advisers may, on request from the department, provide input to inform the assessment process.

Only EOI responses that meet all eligibility criteria will then be assessed against selection criteria. EOI responses will also be assessed to ensure they deliver best value with relevant money.

In assessing an EOI response, the Assessment Committee may consider the applicant's financial viability and any potential project or legal risks of the response, and may use material included in the response to a criteria in the assessment of another.

The Assessment Committee may seek information about any EOI respondent from any other source, including from within the Commonwealth. As part of the due diligence process, the Assessment Committee may also consider information about the applicant that is available through the normal course of departmental business

If the assessment process identifies unintentional errors of form in an EOI response the department may, at its discretion, contact the applicant to correct or clarify the errors. However, applicants will **not** be permitted to make any material alteration or addition to the EOI response.

The department may at any time exclude an EOI response from consideration if:

- responses are incomplete; or
- the respondent or their responses do not comply with the requirements of the EOI; or

- the EOI response is rated ‘unsuitable’ in relation to the responses provided by the respondent.

EOI responses will be rated against the scale in Table 2 as either ‘suitable’ or ‘unsuitable’.

Table 2: Stage 1 - EOI rating scale

Rating	Description
Suitable	Demonstrates at least a satisfactory understanding of the criteria and related issues. A mostly capable response/solution, with at least some experience. At a minimum, there may be a minor level of risk that the proposed outcomes are not achievable. The Panel considers these risks can be mitigated and are manageable within the project.
Unsuitable	Fails to demonstrate an acceptable understanding of the criteria and/or related issues. A poor response/solution with minimal to no experience. Where there is a significant level of risk associated with the proposal.

2.2. How will applications be assessed in stage 2

The department will establish an Assessment Committee to assess applications and make a recommendation to the Delegate on which applicants to fund. The Assessment Committee will be comprised of representatives of the program policy division, specialist grant application assessors and grant managers. The Assessment Committee may also seek input from external advisors to inform the assessment process.

Applications will then be assessed to ensure best value with relevant money is achieved in line with the outcomes and objectives of the Program.

Applications will be assessed against the rating scale in Table 3.

Table 3: Stage 2 - Competitive assessment rating scale

Rating (for individual criterion)	Score
Excellent – response to the criteria, including all sub-criteria, exceeds expectations. Additional evidence* is available and confirms consistent superior performance against this criteria.	9-10
Good – response to the criteria addresses all or most sub-criteria to a higher than average standard. Some additional evidence* is available and confirms good performance against this criteria.	7-8
Average – response against the criteria meets most sub-criteria to an average but acceptable level. Some additional evidence* is available and provides some support for claims against this criteria.	5-6
Poor – poor claims against the criteria, but may meet some sub-criteria. Additional information available may be lacking detail and/or not directly relevant to the criteria.	2-4

Rating (for individual criterion)	Score
Does not meet criteria at all – response to the criteria does not meet expectations or insufficient or no information to assess this criteria. Little or no additional evidence* available.	0-1

*Additional evidence may include specified attachments to the application, previous departmental experience with this applicant, referee reports or information from other responses in the application.

Applicant must attain a score of “5” or more to be rated ‘suitable’.

The assessment scores for the selection criteria will be scaled according to the weightings in Table 4 to determine the final score.

Table 4: Selection Criteria weightings

Selection Criteria	Weighting
Selection Criterion 1 – Support & strengthen rural health workforce	30%
Selection Criterion 2 – Provision of teaching and training opportunities	30%
Selection Criterion 3 – Improve health service delivery/unmet healthcare needs	30%
Selection Criterion 4 – Improve healthy living	10%

Where the number of suitable applications is greater than the available funding applications the department will rank in order of program objectives. The Assessment Committee will make a recommendation to the departmental Delegate if the applicants’ scores are equal using the PHN Needs Assessment Report linkages as the final methodology for ranking applications.

2.3. Value with relevant money

All funds provided under the Program for grants and procurement activities are considered relevant money. The Australian Government is required to make proper use of public resources including achieving value with relevant money. The department considers the following factors in assessing whether a grant will achieve best value with relevant money:

- the alignment of the application with the objective and outcomes of the program;
- the applicant’s capacity to fulfil the activity requirements;
- past performance in undertaking similar funding agreements;
- whole of activity costs in relation to the deliverables and their contribution to achieving programme outcomes; and
- the degree to which identified risk is identified and mitigated.

2.4. Approval of Grant funding

Following the Assessment Committee' assessment of the applications, advice will be provided by the Committee Chair to the funding Delegate on the merits of the applications.

The Delegate will consider whether the proposal will make an efficient, effective, ethical and economical use of Commonwealth resources, as required by Commonwealth Legislation, and whether any specific requirements will need to be imposed as a condition of funding.

Funding approval is at the discretion of the Delegate.

2.5. Application outcomes

Notification of application outcomes

The department will advise all applicants of the outcome of their application in writing following a decision by the Delegate. Advice to applicants who are recommended for funding will contain details of any specific conditions attached to the funding offer. Funding approvals will be listed on the [department's website](#).

Unsuccessful applicants may not be notified until funding agreements have been entered into with the successful applicants.

Feedback on applications

Unsuccessful applicants may request feedback on their applications from the department within a period of two months of being advised of the outcome. The department will provide feedback in writing within one month of receiving a request for feedback.

2.6. Award of grants and contracting arrangements

The awarding of grants is at the sole discretion of the Delegate.

The Delegate for funding under the Program is the Minister for Health or the departmental Delegate/s nominated for the purposes of the Program. The nominated Delegate/s is the First Assistant Secretary, Health Services Division and the Assistant Secretary, Primary Healthcare Branch, Health Services Division.

In approving the award of a grant, the Delegate must consider whether the grant activity will make an efficient, effective, ethical and economical use of Australian Government resources, as required by Commonwealth legislation. The Delegate may require that specific conditions be imposed upon any offer of funding. **This may include offering a lesser funding amount than the amount applied for by the applicant.**

Applicants who are recommended for funding will be required to enter into a funding agreement with the Commonwealth (represented by the department) before receiving any grant funding. The department may use the Department of Health Capital Works Standard Funding Agreement to fund grants under the Program. The standard terms and conditions of the designated agreement will apply and cannot be negotiated. The department may apply supplementary conditions to a funding agreement that override standard conditions or add additional conditions, based on the requirements of the specific activity and a risk assessment of the organisation delivering the activity.

The department will negotiate with applicants who are recommended for funding with the aim of having funding agreements signed shortly after a decision by the Delegate. If an agreement cannot be reached within 6 weeks from the time of receipt of a letter of offer, the application will be deemed to have lapsed.

Applicants will not be considered successful and should not make financial commitments in expectation of receiving funding until a funding agreement has been executed with the Commonwealth.

3. Delivery of Grant Activities

3.1. Funding recipient responsibilities

Funding recipients must carry out each activity in accordance with these Program guidelines and the obligations contained in the funding agreement, which includes the standard terms and conditions, any supplementary conditions and the schedule. The schedule will outline the requirements specific to the funded activity.

Funding recipients are responsible for:

- ensuring that the terms and conditions of the funding agreement are met and that the activity is managed in an efficient and effective manner;
- ensuring the efficient and effective use of grant funds;
- employing and managing staff required to deliver the activity;
- maintaining contact with the department and advising of any emerging issues that may impact on the success of the activity;
- identifying, documenting and managing risks and putting in place appropriate mitigation strategies;
- meeting milestones and other timeframes specified in the funding agreement;
- complying with record keeping, reporting and acquittal requirements in accordance with funding agreement;
- participating in activity evaluation as necessary for the period specified in the funding agreement;
- ensuring that activity outcomes are in accordance with the funding agreement; and
- maintaining all required insurances throughout the grant period.

It will be a requirement of the Funding Agreement that funding recipients operate the general practice and report to the department for three years upon completion of the works and will require tenure for the entirety of this time. The department reserves the right to terminate the contract and request repayment of funds if the funding recipient cannot meet this requirement.

3.2. Grant payments

The department will make payments to funding recipients in accordance with the executed funding agreement. The department's default invoice process is Recipient Created Tax Invoices (RCTI).

3.3. Reporting requirements

Specific reporting requirements will form part of each funded organisation's agreement with the department. Funding recipients must provide the department with the reports for an activity containing the information, and at the times and in the manner specified in the funding agreement.

Reporting requirements may vary depending on the department's risk assessment of each funding agreement and may include:

- a project plan and budget;
- evidence of achievement of construction milestones;
- annual income and expenditure reports; and
- a final report.

Risk assessments may be reviewed by the department at any time during the life of the funding agreement and reporting requirements may be adjusted accordingly.

Note: that reporting requirements will continue for three years following the Practical Completion of the project. Non-performance on reporting may result in termination of the Funding Agreement and the requirement to repay grant funds.

During the construction period funding recipients will be required to report against milestones and other reports specified in the funding agreement for financial acquittal purposes.

Once the infrastructure project is completed (the operational phase), funding recipients will be required to report annually for a period of three years.

3.4. Risk Management

The department is committed to a comprehensive and systematic approach to the effective management of risk. Contractual arrangements will be managed in proportion to the level of risk to the Commonwealth. As such, applicants and funding recipients may be subject to a risk management assessment by the department prior to the offer of any contractual arrangement and periodically thereafter.

Funding agreements may require supplementary conditions and increased reporting frequency as a result of the department's risk assessment of a funding recipient for the delivery of a specific activity. The department may at any time review this risk assessment and vary the funding agreement to introduce or remove additional requirements. Funding recipients may receive different risk ratings for the delivery of different activities and the requirements of each funding agreement will reflect the risk associated with the delivery of that activity.

Funding recipients are responsible for managing risks to their own business activities and priorities. The department manages risks to Australian Government policy outcomes and relevant money through its management of grants under the Program.

3.5. Program evaluation

An evaluation of the Program will be conducted to determine how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. Funding agreements will include a requirement for grant recipients to provide information where required, to assist in this evaluation for a specified period of time after funding ceases.

3.6. Branding

Any public documents published as a result of grants under the Program should acknowledge the Commonwealth as follows:

“[Organisation name] is supported by funding from the Australian Government under the Rural General Practice Grants Program.”

4. Probity and Legislation

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring that the process for providing funding under the Program is transparent and in accordance with these guidelines.

Australian Public Service staff involved in grants administration are accountable for complying with the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#) (CGRGs) and other policies and legislation that interact with grants administration.

4.1. Complaints process

The department’s [Grant and Procurement Complaints Procedures](#) apply to complaints that arise in relation to grant and procurement processes. It covers events that occur between the time the funding round documentation is released to potential applicants and the date of contract execution, regardless of when the actual complaint is made. The department requires that all complaints relating to a grant or procurement process must be lodged in writing.

Any enquiries relating to funding decisions for the Program should be directed to Grant.ATM@health.gov.au.

4.2. Conflict of interest

A [conflict of interest](#) may exist if departmental staff, any member of an assessment committee or external advisers, and/or the applicant or any of its personnel:

- has a relationship (whether professional, commercial or personal) with a party who is able to influence the application assessment process, such as a departmental officer;
- has a 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
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain as a result of the organisation receiving funding under the Program.

Each applicant will be required to declare as part of their application

- any existing or perceived conflicts of interest or to the best of their knowledge;
- declare that there is no conflict of interest that would impact on the project; or
- prevent the applicant from proceeding with the activity or any funding agreement it may enter into with the Australian Government.

Where a party subsequently identifies that an actual, apparent, perceived or potential conflict of interest exists or might arise in relation to an application for funding, external parties must inform the department in writing immediately. The Chair of the Assessment Committee will be made aware of any conflicts of interest and will handle them in compliance with departmental policies and procedures.

Departmental staff involved in the assessment of grant applications will be required to declare any conflicts of interest via a declaration form before viewing the contents of any grant applications. Conflicts of interest for staff will be handled in compliance with the [Australian Public Service Commission policies and procedures](#).

4.3. Privacy - confidentiality and protection of personal information

Each applicant will be required, as part of their application, to declare their ability to comply with the [Privacy Act 1988](#), including the 13 Australian Privacy Principles, and impose the same privacy obligations on any subcontractors they engage to assist with the activity.

The funding agreement will impose obligations on the funding recipient with respect to special categories of information collected, created or held under the funding agreement. The funding recipient is required to seek the department's consent in writing before disclosing confidential information.

4.4. Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the department, including those in relation to the Program, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (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 agencies. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the department. 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 FOI requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

By mail: Freedom of Information Coordinator
 FOI Unit
 Department of Health
 GPO Box 9848
 CANBERRA ACT 2601

By email: foi@health.gov.au

For more information about making a freedom of information request for access to documents in the possession of the department, please visit the department's [Freedom of Information webpage](#).

5. Consultation

The department has received feedback from stakeholders with regard to the development of grant program guidelines and grants administration arrangements. This consultation indicated stakeholder expectations which contributed to the development of the Program and these guidelines.

6. Glossary of Terms

The Activity

The specific activity or project that is the subject of a grant.

Accredited General Practice

A practice that is accredited, or registered for accreditation, against the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Standards for general practices.

Approach to market

Any formal opportunity to apply for grant funding under the Program.

Assessment Committee

The panel of assessment staff formed to assess applications for funding.

Client site project manager:

A client side project manager is any suitably qualified third party engaged by the funding recipient to supervise all construction work under the project. Where the total value of the building and construction project is equal to or exceeds \$500,000, a client side project manager is required and he or she must not be an employee or officer of the applicant. This is distinct from any person engaged by the department to undertake certain oversight functions in relation to the works (e.g. an infrastructure project facilitator), which will be a requirement for some programs.

Co-contribution

A financial contribution to the activity by the grant recipient that matches or exceeds the amount of grant funding provided by the Australian Government under the Program.

Compliance Requirements

Any mandatory requirements around the completion and submission of applications for grants under the Program.

Consortia

Is an association or partnership. If the applicant is a consortium, please provide letters of support from the other organisations involved.

Construction/Building Work – light/heavy

means the construction, alteration, extension, restoration, repair, demolition or dismantling of buildings, structures or works that form, or are to form, part of land, whether or not the buildings, structures or works are permanent; and the installation in any building, structure or works of fittings forming, or to form, part of land, including heating, lighting, air-

conditioning, ventilation, power supply, drainage, sanitation, water supply, fire protection, security and communications systems.

As defined by Section 5 of the [*Building and Construction Industry Improvement Act 2005*](#)

The Delegate

The person with the authority to award funding under the Program.

The Department

The Australian Government Department of Health, unless otherwise stated.

Designated use

The Designated Use is the provision of health services to rural and regional communities and for teaching and training general practitioners, allied health professionals, Aboriginal health practitioners, nurses and nurse practitioners.

The Designated Use Period is the period commencing on the date that Your Organisation finalises the RGPGP infrastructure project and expiring three years after that date.

Eligibility Criteria

The minimum mandatory requirements which applicants must meet in order to qualify for a grant under a funding round.

EOI

The Expression of Interest documentation that applies to stage 1 of the Program.

Equipment purchase / lease

Includes the purchase of specialised equipment and cost of installation if required. Excludes fittings and fixtures (taps, air conditioning etc.) which should be included under the cost of construction and/or refurbishment.

Existing premises

A section of land and the buildings on it.

Extended and/or refurbished/converted

Predominantly refurbished or converted existing buildings where the extent of the new addition or extension is significantly less than the area refurbished or converted.

Financial Year

A 12 month period beginning on 1 July of one year and ending on 30 June the following year.

Funding Round

Any formal opportunity to apply for grant funding under the Program.

General Practice

General practice provides person centred, continuing, comprehensive and coordinated whole-of-person health care to individuals and families in their communities. It is a clinical speciality that is orientated to primary health care.

Funding Agreement

A contractual arrangement between a funding recipient and the Commonwealth, as represented by the department, including the terms and conditions of the department's

Standard Funding Agreement or the Commonwealth Low Risk Grant Agreement, any supplementary conditions and the schedule for a specific activity.

Funding Recipient

An organisation funded by the Commonwealth to deliver a grant activity.

Gross floor area

The total of the Fully Enclosed Covered Area (FECA) and the Under Cover Area (UCA) as defined in the most recent version of the Australian Standards Handbook “Glossary of Building Terms”.

GP Registrar

Qualified doctors who are training to become GPs under the supervision of an approved GP trainer.

Health Facility

A building that is described in the following way; General Practice, Medical Centre/Clinic, Aboriginal Medical Service, community health facility, Multi-Purpose Service and allied health clinic.

Healthy living

Healthy living is the practice of health enhancing behaviours, or put simply, living in healthy ways. It implies the physical, mental and spiritual capacity to make healthy choices.

In-kind Contribution

A donation of goods or services, time or expertise, rather than cash or appreciated property.

ITA

The ITA documentation that applies to stage 2 of the Program.

Modified Monash Classification

The Department of Health classification system that categorises metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas according to both geographical remoteness and town size. The MMM was developed to recognise the challenges in attracting health workers to more remote and smaller communities and is updated annually. Further information can be found on the Doctor Connect website.

New building

Any construction deemed by the relevant local council to be new construction.

PHN Needs Assessment Report

The applicant can contact their local PHN and request a local needs assessment report by following the individual links at [the Department's PHN website](#).

Planning

Feasibility activities, site investigations, functional brief/scope development, concept drawings, order of costs development, development approval being developed, under consideration, or approved; design siting settled; infrastructure issues such as road redirection, traffic light, water, sewerage and power line issues identified; and lease clause or title encumbrances identified, professional consultants identified / engaged, documentation to 50%, development / planning approvals obtained.

Practical Completion

Contracted work has been essentially completed and is fit for its intended purpose except for minor omissions and defects that do not prevent its use and with tests required under the contract having been carried out. A 'Certificate of Practical Completion' and/ or a 'Certificate of Occupancy' are issued by the relevant authority. All furnishings and fittings required under the funding agreement and building contract have been correctly installed.

The Program

The Rural General Practice Grants Program.

Recognised Training Facility

The health facility may also hold status as a training facility through recognition by an accredited authority recognised by the department or AHPRA.

Refurbishment

To renovate or convert.

Relevant Money

Money standing to the credit of any bank account of the Commonwealth or a corporate Commonwealth entity or money that is held by the Commonwealth or a corporate Commonwealth entity.

Selection Criteria

The set of questions against which applicants' suitability to deliver a grant activity will be assessed by the department.

Selection Process

The method from the list in Part A, section 0 used to select funding recipients.

Tenure

The conditions under which land or buildings are held or occupied. Tenure refers to the legal right to the use of specified land (e.g. owned by you (Torrens Title), leased, Native Title).

APPENDIX 2: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can my organisation apply for more than one project under this funding round?

Yes.

Will late EOI responses and applications be accepted?

In the interest of fairness, the department reserves the right not to accept late EOI responses and applications. In considering whether it would be fair to accept a late EOI response or application, the department will take into account the degree of lateness, whether the cause of the lateness was beyond the applicant's control and such other facts as it considers relevant. The department may also ask the applicant to provide evidence to support its claims regarding the reasons for late submittal.

When will my organisation find out if my application has been successful?

It is anticipated that applicants will be notified of the outcome of the two-stage application process by May 2017.

Can a number of organisations submit a consortium application?

Yes. A joint application will be considered as a consortium. If the work or activity involves more than one organisation, you can submit a joint application. However, in order to manage the funds appropriately, if a joint application is successful, the department will enter into a funding agreement with the nominated lead organisation. The joint application should include letters of support in line with [section 1.6].

What is a lead organisation?

If you submit a joint application with one or more other organisations, you should nominate a lead organisation for the application. The lead organisation for the activity will, if your application is successful, sign the funding agreement, receive the funding and assume legal responsibility for performing the funding agreement.

A lead organisation must be a legal entity that meets the eligibility criteria in section 1.5, including having tenure over the proposed premises and be able to enter into the funding agreement.

Are there any GST or income tax-related issues involved in receiving funding?

Yes. The funding agreement will outline the taxes (including GST), duties and government charges for which successful funding applicants will be responsible.

Applicants are responsible for ensuring compliance with appropriate taxation legislative requirements.

For general guidance on the taxation treatment of grants and funding from the Commonwealth, applicants may wish to refer to the [Australian Taxation Office website](#). **Applicants are advised to seek independent advice from a taxation professional on how funding provided under this Program would be treated for tax purposes before applying.**

When will my organisation receive the funding?

All payments of funding will be based on milestones (e.g. performance reports) as set out in the schedule to the funding agreement.

Who should I contact if I need more information?

If you have any other questions or you need more information, direct all queries in writing by email to the Grant.ATM@health.gov.au inbox.

Ensure that you submit questions by no later than the relevant dates specified in the EOI and ITA documentation. This allows the department to disseminate information to applicants with sufficient time for the applicant to consider the impact of the response on their application.