

Investing in Women Grants

2026/27 Guidelines

January 2026

Acknowledgement of Country

The Cabinet Office acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live. We celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contributed to the development of these guidelines for the Investing in Women grants.

Investing in Women Grants

Published by Women NSW, The Cabinet Office

First published: January 2026

Copyright and disclaimer

© State of New South Wales through The Cabinet Office 2025. Information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing, January 2026, and is subject to change. For more information, please visit <https://www.nsw.gov.au/nsw-government/copyright>.

Grant Round Details	
Expressions of Interest (EOIs) open	10:00 AEDT on 17 February 2026
Expressions of Interest close	15:00 AEDT on 13 March 2026
Anticipated EOI outcome	Late March 2026
Dates below are only applicable for applicants shortlisted to complete a full grant application	
Full Grant Application opening	10:00 AEDT on 13 April 2026
Full Grant Application closing	15:00 AEDT on 24 April 2026
Application outcomes advised	June 2026
Anticipated date for Funding Deed execution (with successful applicants)	June 2026
Project delivery timeframe (for successful applicants)	1 July 2026 – 30 June 2027 Applicants for multi-year funding must conclude activity by 30 June 2029
Decision-maker	Deputy Secretary, Social Policy and Intergovernmental Relations, The Cabinet Office
NSW Government Agency	Women NSW, The Cabinet Office
Type of grant opportunity	Open, competitive
Grant value (total available funding for the grant and the available individual grant amounts, excluding GST)	Total funding budget of \$1 million. Applicants can request: Up to 12-month projects: \$25,000 - \$100,000 Multi-year Projects: \$50,000 to \$250,000 per annum (excluding GST) per applicant.
Enquiries	If you have any questions about the grant that are not covered in these funding guidelines, please contact Women NSW: Email: WNSWGrants@tco.nsw.gov.au For queries about the online grant management system, Smarty Grants, please contact the support team at: Email: service@smartygrants.com.au Phone: (03) 9320 6888 Available to help Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:00 (Australian Eastern Standard time).

NB: The above dates are proposed only and are subject to change. The Cabinet Office (Women NSW) will notify applicants of any changes to timeframes and deadlines.

Contents

1	Overview of the grants	1
1.1	Key factors for successful projects.....	1
1.2	Purpose.....	1
1.2.1	Economic opportunity and advancement.....	1
1.2.2	Health and wellbeing.....	2
1.2.3	Participation and empowerment	2
1.3	Intended outcomes	2
1.3.1	Economic opportunity and advancement.....	2
1.3.2	Health and wellbeing.....	2
1.3.3	Participation and empowerment	3
1.4	Focus communities	3
1.5	Grant value.....	3
1.6	Project start and end dates.....	4
1.7	Multi-year funding option	4
2	Eligibility requirements	5
2.1	Who is eligible to apply.....	5
2.1.1	Not-for-profit organisations:.....	5
2.1.2	Requirements for social enterprises	6
2.1.3	Requirements for majority women-owned and managed NSW small businesses	6
2.2	Ineligible Applicants.....	6
2.2.1	NSW National Redress Scheme sanctions.....	7
2.3	Eligible and ineligible uses of funding.....	7
2.3.1	Items eligible for grant expenditure:.....	7
2.3.2	Items not eligible for grant expenditure:.....	7
3	Assessment and prioritisation	9
3.1	Assessment criteria	9
3.1.1	Additional assessment criteria for multi-year project proposals	11
3.2	Prioritisation of projects	11
3.3	Evidence requirements	11
4	Expression of Interest and Application process	13
4.1	How to apply	13
4.1.1	Stage One - Expression of Interest Application.....	13
4.1.2	Stage Two – Full Grant Application (shortlisted applicants only).....	13
4.2	Support for Applicants.....	14
4.2.1	Accessibility	14
4.2.2	Support.....	14

4.2.3	SmartyGrants.....	14
5	Assessment process.....	15
5.1	Assessment of grant applications.....	15
5.1.1	Stage One – Expression of Interest Application.....	15
5.1.2	Stage Two – Full Grant Application Assessment.....	15
5.1.3	Stage Three – Assessment Panel recommendations.....	15
5.2	Notification of application outcome.....	15
5.3	Feedback on applications.....	15
5.4	Publication of grants information.....	16
6	Successful grant applications.....	17
6.1	Project evaluation.....	18
6.2	Variations to the approved funding activity.....	18
6.3	Unspent funds.....	18
6.4	Advertising and promotion.....	18
6.5	Reporting and acquittal requirements.....	19
6.6	Insurance.....	19
7	Additional information and resources.....	20
7.1	Disclaimer.....	20
7.2	Complaint handling.....	20
7.3	Access to information.....	20
7.4	Conflict of interest management.....	20
7.5	Confidentiality.....	21
8	Appendices.....	22
	Appendix A – Investing in Women Project Logic template.....	22
	Appendix B - Sources of evidence.....	22
	Appendix C - Project Evaluation.....	22
	Appendix D – NSW Regions.....	22

1 Overview of the grants

Since 2013, \$6.8 million has been awarded to 141 projects through the Investing in Women Program. Twelve rounds of Investing in Women funding have been delivered to enhance women's economic opportunities, health, and leadership in NSW. More information about successful projects is available on the [Women NSW website](#).

Organisations wishing to apply for an Investing in Women grant should submit an Expression of Interest (EOI). The EOI form is simpler and shorter to complete than a full grant application form.

A shortlist of organisations with projects that most closely match the priorities of the Investing in Women Program will then be invited to complete the more detailed full grant application form through SmartyGrants.

Women NSW encourages applicants to read all the details in these guidelines before applying and refer to the FAQs. Women NSW has a responsibility to make sure projects provide value for money. It is important you are able to demonstrate how your proposed project provides outcomes and how the grant will deliver value for money.

The Minister for Women has approved these guidelines and the launch of this grant program. Final decisions will be made by the Deputy Secretary, Social Policy and Intergovernmental Relations (The Cabinet Office) as the Minister's delegate.

1.1 Key factors for successful projects

Five key factors for successful projects are:

- The likely **benefits** of the project are obvious, valuable to the focus community and easily identifiable (see **1.3**)
 - The project will deliver clear outcomes that align with **Pillars 2 or 3** (see **3.2**)
 - The project will be **located** in an area corresponding to the greatest need for the focus community (see **3.2**)
 - A clear connection to, involvement with and outcome for one of the **focus communities** (see **1.4**)
 - Evidence for the need for the project and the expertise of the applicant organisation to deliver the project is clearly demonstrated (see **3.3**)
-

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the Investing in Women Funding Program is to fund innovative projects that focus on the three pillars that align with the [NSW Women's Strategy \(2023 – 2026\)](#).

1.2.1 Economic opportunity and advancement

Projects should contribute to improving women's economic opportunities and advancement and support diverse and flexible employment opportunities for women and girls in NSW. For example, projects that:

- Increase women's opportunities in the workplace
- Focus on transitions between careers and life stages
- Provide pathways into work, careers, and leadership
- Support financial security, capability, and wellbeing throughout life stages, including retirement

1.2.2 Health and wellbeing

Projects should contribute to promoting and supporting a holistic approach to women's health and wellbeing. For example, projects that:

- Promote safe relationships, safe communities
- Promote understanding and awareness of women's and girls' health needs
- Provide services and support for women's and girls' physical and mental health
- Secure housing, preventing homelessness

1.2.3 Participation and empowerment

Projects should contribute to supporting women's engagement through social networks and access to information. For example, projects that:

- Challenge gendered norms, roles, and expectations
- Create leaders in community and work
- Uplift focus communities
- Rebuild connections and engage with community

1.3 Intended outcomes

Investing in Women grants aim to achieve the following outcomes, focusing on the three pillars that align with the [NSW Women's Strategy \(2023 – 2026\)](#):

1.3.1 Economic opportunity and advancement

- Increase in women's labour force participation in NSW
- Increase in gender equality for taking leave to care for others in NSW
- Decrease in gender segregation in the NSW workforce
- Decrease in the gender pay gap in NSW
- Increase in women's personal financial wellbeing in NSW
- Increased skills to enter the workforce
- Improved levels of work readiness and confidence
- Reduced financial stress
- Increase in number of women-owned/led businesses

1.3.2 Health and wellbeing

- Improved mental health and wellbeing
- Improved physical health
- Improved access to health services and information for [diverse] women
- Increase in actual and perceived safety for women in NSW
- Increase in women's life satisfaction in NSW
- Increase in safe and stable housing for women in NSW

1.3.3 Participation and empowerment

- Decrease in gender segregation in NSW education
- Increase in completion of education and training by girls and women in NSW
- Increase of [diverse] women in senior leadership in NSW
- Increase in women's social connectedness in NSW
- Increased participation by women in sport in NSW
- Increased participation by women in creative industries in NSW
- Increased volunteering by women in NSW
- Increased consultation and co-design with diverse women in NSW

1.4 Focus communities

Projects must involve **high-quality activity, engagement, and participation** designed with and for one of the focus communities in the NSW Women's Strategy 2023-2026:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls
- carers
- girls and young women living in, or who have lived in, out-of-home care
- lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer and/or asexual (LGBTIQA+) women and girls
- older women
- women and girls experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage
- women and girls facing homelessness
- women and girls from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities
- women and girls in contact with the criminal justice system
- women and girls living in regional, rural, remote and cross-border areas
- women and girls with disability
- women and girls with a mental illness
- women and girls who have a history of, or are currently experiencing, domestic, family or sexual violence
- women veterans (and the women partners of veterans and service members)
- young women

1.5 Grant value

Women NSW will fund multiple projects, with total funding of \$1 million per annum.

Organisations can apply for:

- \$25,000 - \$100, 000 for projects that run no longer than 12 months.
- \$50,000 - \$250,000 per annum for projects that run for up to three years.

Funding requests will be considered competitive depending on the project model, the number of participants to be supported, and the level and intensity of services and supports provided to participants.

An applicant contribution of a minimum of 10% of the total project cost per annum is required.

1.6 Project start and end dates

Projects must be complete by the following dates:

- Up to 12-month projects: within 12 months from the start date or receiving grant monies (latest end date being December 2027)
- Multi-year projects: up to three years from the start date or receiving grant monies (latest end date being December 2029)

If changes must be made, Grant recipients must contact Women NSW in writing to seek approval prior to the date.

1.7 Multi-year funding option

Funding is available for projects that roll over multiple years to support growth and sustainability. Organisations that have demonstrated a strong track record in delivery and outcomes are eligible to apply for multi-year funding.

Projects which address “Signposts for the Future” in Pillars 2 and 3 from the NSW Women’s Strategy are the types of projects likely to attract multi-year funding. Projects which address Pillar 1 of the Strategy or other innovative programs will also be considered for multi-year funding.

Types of activity funded under multi-year could include:

Pillar 2: Health and wellbeing

- Increasing knowledge and awareness of, and clinical support for, women’s reproductive health, including exploring ways to improve experiences in education settings and the workplace.
- Projects developing telehealth to improve the reach and responsiveness of medical care.
- Programs for women and girls in correctional and youth justice centres with a focus on trauma, women, and girls as parents, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls, and the transition from correctional centres to life in the community.
- Projects which improve access to early intervention, mental health, and wellbeing support for girls.
- Projects addressing the needs of women and girls at risk of housing insecurity and homelessness.

Pillar 3: Participation and Empowerment

- Programs that foster leadership in younger women and create pathways to leadership positions in public and private organisations.
- Projects which advocate for meaningful engagement with focus communities across relevant areas of government, including in policy development and program design and implementation.
- Projects which build opportunities for women in focus communities to be leaders and to promote positive representations of women in these communities.
- Projects to increase women's and girls' participation in sport or encouraging girls to be physically active through sport from adolescence into adulthood.
- Projects which encourage community sports organisations to ensure all sports are inclusive and safe.

2 Eligibility requirements

Selection criteria for a grant comprises both eligibility and assessment criteria. Applicants are required to meet all the eligibility criteria below and competitively address the assessment criteria (see section **3.1 Assessment Criteria**).

2.1 Who is eligible to apply

To be eligible, applicants must:

- be an Australian-based incorporated legal entity
- be one of the following:
 - a not-for-profit organisation as defined in section 2.1.1 of these guidelines
 - a social enterprise as defined in section 2.1.2 of these guidelines, or
 - a majority women-owned and managed small business as defined in section 2.1.3 of these guidelines
- have an active Australian Business Number (ABN)
- have appropriate public liability insurance (minimum of \$10 million).
- address the NSW National Redress Scheme sanctions (included in these guidelines).
- have an account with an Australian Authorised deposit-taking institution
- not have outstanding acquittals with Women NSW
- not be receiving or have received government assistance from another program for the proposed project or a similar project
- include an applicant contribution (cash or in-kind) of a minimum 10 percent of the total project cost (not 10 percent of the amount of funding sought)
- provide a budget for their project
- be a single organisation that will accept responsibility for the delivery of the project if the application is successful, and
- not be an ineligible applicant as set out in section 2.2 of these guidelines.

2.1.1 Not-for-profit organisations:

To be considered a not-for-profit organisation, an organisation must be registered and approved as a not-for-profit body with a current and up-to-date record in at least one of the following categories:

- a. Charities and cooperatives that are registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)
- b. Organisations with Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status
- c. Organisations with Public Benevolent Institution status
- d. Associations registered under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009* (NSW) and with NSW Fair Trading
- e. Non-distributing co-operatives registered under the *Co-operatives National Law* (NSW) and with NSW Fair Trading
- f. Not-for-profit, public companies limited by guarantee
- g. A Local Aboriginal Land Council under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* (NSW) and registered with the NSW Aboriginal Land Council, or
- h. Indigenous Corporations registered with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations.

2.1.2 Requirements for social enterprises

To be considered a social enterprise, an organisation must satisfy each of the criteria below:

- be a business that trades primarily for a defined social purpose consistent with a public and/or community benefit
- be established with a social, cultural or environmental purpose consistent with a public and/or community benefit
- trade commercially to fulfil their purpose
- derive a substantial portion of their income from trading commercially
- reinvest the majority of their surplus in the fulfilment of their purpose

Social Traders certification or People and Planet First global verification is required as evidence to demonstrate the social enterprise definition is met. Organisations will be required to indicate which certification or verifications they will use and provide evidence in the application. Applications without certification will not be accepted.

2.1.3 Requirements for majority women-owned and managed NSW small businesses

To be considered a women-owned NSW small business, an organisation must:

- Be located within NSW for at least six months prior to applying or since commencement if the business has been operating for less than six months (this applies to both the registered office and the principal place of business).
- Provide a current ASIC company extract that demonstrates:
 - The CEO (or equivalent) is a woman, and the majority of Officeholders are women and have held these roles for at least six months prior to applying or since the business commenced operations if it has been operating for less than six months
 - The majority of shares are beneficially owned by women
- Have less than 20 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees including Founders
- Have an Aggregated Turnover that is no more than \$10 million in each of the three financial years prior to the lodgement of your application and provide evidence of such.
- Provide an accountant declaration confirming the aggregated turnover and FTE employees using the template provided.

2.2 Ineligible Applicants

You are not eligible if you are:

- An individual or group of individuals, including sole traders
- An unincorporated organisation
- Insolvent
- A sub-contractor – either for program management or for project delivery on behalf of non-eligible organisations
- A trust or trustee
- A partnership
- A federal, state, territory or local government agency or body (including public trusts and government business enterprises)

- Receiving or have received NSW or Commonwealth Government funding for the proposed project or a similar project
- A business not included under “Who is eligible to apply”
- Applicants requesting 100 percent of project funding from Women NSW
- Applicants with outstanding acquittal requirements with Women NSW
- NSW Government schools, Area Health Services and public hospitals. However, an associated incorporated not-for-profit body, such as a Parents and Citizens Association or hospital auxiliary is eligible
- Applicants with an obligation under the NSW National Redress Scheme who have not joined the Scheme

2.2.1 NSW National Redress Scheme sanctions

The NSW Government will not award a Grant Funding Arrangement to a non-government organisation with Redress Obligation (or to any of its Related Entities) if that non-government organisation:

- Has declined to join the Scheme, or
- At the expiry of six months after the time it is notified to join the Scheme, has failed to do so.

For further information visit the website [NSW National Redress Scheme sanctions](#).

2.3 Eligible and ineligible uses of funding

Applicants will not be eligible where the budget includes ineligible items.

Investing in Women grants must only be used for expenses directly related to the development and delivery of the project activities.

2.3.1 Items eligible for grant expenditure:

Grant funding can only be used for expenses directly related to the delivery of the project in NSW. Applicants must clearly set out proposed expenditure in the application and outline how the project will demonstrate value for money.

Some (non-exhaustive) examples include:

- Staff, contractors and consultants, where the costs are for direct project delivery only
- Evaluation activities
- Resource materials
- Equipment for participant use, transport and venue hire
- Publicity, communications and marketing activities and materials
- Catering costs, food and non-alcoholic beverages for community engagement activities
- Travel costs within NSW exclusively for the purpose of the project

2.3.2 Items not eligible for grant expenditure:

- Business capital or start-up funding.
- Purchase of, or cost of infrastructure, assets and/or capital equipment and works.
- Permanent equipment purchases (e.g. computers, phones or iPads or other items not specific to the project).

- Operating costs of the organisation or recurrent expenses (e.g. insurance, leases, bills, general office consumables and disposables).
- Permanent wages, salaries and on-costs for ongoing staff.
- Organisational development costs for internal staff (e.g. staff training, conferences, workshops, planning days).
- Conferences – you cannot use the fund to conferences and workshops, or to pay for an individual or group attend a conference. This does not include structured, time limited training sessions and workshops with practical and clear outcomes for project participants.
- Prizes, competition or awards (e.g. cash giveaways, lucky door prizes, raffle prizes).
- Interstate and/or overseas travel allowances or costs associated with membership of boards/councils.
- Costs associated with membership of boards/councils
- Retrospective costs (any money spent before a grant is approved).
- Fundraising for the purposes of fundraising for charities or for the organisation's personal use.
- Political activities which promote or support a political party
- Projects that are run solely for commercial purposes to the benefit of the delivery partner but not the program participants.
- Projects and activities coordinated by NSW Government Departments and Statutory Authorities.
- Research projects, including those which are co-funded by State or Federal Governments and/or other organisations.
- Purchase of promotional/awareness raising merchandise that will be sold for profit.
- Activities which require participants to pay more than a nominal amount to attend.
- Fees associated with an auspice agreement.
- Existing debt or loan repayments.
- Events that encourage gambling (e.g. raffles, bingo) or the consumption of alcohol.
- Non-essential costs which are not related to the proposed core activity

3 Assessment and prioritisation

Investing in Women is a competitive grant program with limited funding available. Eligible applications will be assessed against the assessment criteria below (**section 3.1**).

Assessors may also take a number of other factors into account when recommending a selection of applications for grant funding, for further information see **section 3.2 Prioritisation of projects**.

3.1 Assessment criteria

The assessment process is competitive. The application must clearly demonstrate how the project addresses the program assessment criteria below in their application.

Each application will be assessed competitively against the following criteria:

Criteria	Specific information and evidence required	Weighting
Criterion 1: Organisational capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants demonstrate well-established (long-standing, very close or with multiple partners) connections with the focus community, local delivery capability and local delivery partners. The organisation has the appropriate skills and expertise (including qualifications, if relevant) to deliver the project, including prior experience delivering similar projects and capacity to evaluate and report on impact. Applications include recent documentary evidence of previous successful delivery of outcomes to the focus community. 	20%
Criterion 2: Effective delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The application sets out the types, level, and intensity (frequency, amount, in-person compared to virtual) of supports to be provided to participants and provides a rationale and costings. There is a clear project timeline which demonstrates specific timeframes and milestones for each activity. The application outlines how participants benefit and has mitigation measures for potential risks. The project is located or focused on geographical areas of greatest need and the application provides evidence of this need. 	20%

Criteria	Specific information and evidence required	Weighting
Criterion 3: Relevant and evidence-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project identifies a specific issue or need for women and/or girls that will be addressed through the project and the application provides evidence of this need. • The project aligns with one of the three pillars of the NSW Women’s Strategy, with preference given to Pillars 2 and 3. • The project aligns with the aims of the Investing in Women program and this round. • The project is relevant and feasible, and the application includes evidence of the efficacy of the project approach. 	20%
Criterion 4: Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a clear budget outlining expenditure which demonstrates value for money in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — funding sought from WNSW — applicant contributions — overall costs — the value of the outcomes and benefits that will be delivered. • Benefits to participants are clear and the cost per participant justifies the funding sought. • The budget includes only eligible funding items. • The budget is feasible (the amount of money requested is likely to be sufficient for the project to deliver its stated aims). • The budget demonstrates how resources will be optimised. 	20%
Criterion 5: Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application outlines the practical ways that women and/or girls will benefit from the project and how these outcomes will be measured and evaluated. • The outcomes are valuable (they advance gender equality in NSW to ensure women and girls have full access to opportunity and choice, have their diversity recognised, are valued for their contribution and can participate in all aspects of life freely and safely) and appropriate for the focus community. • The project aims to create sustainable change and ongoing benefits for women and girls. 	20%

3.1.1 Additional assessment criteria for multi-year project proposals

In addition to the criteria above, to be considered for multi-year funding, organisations must:

- be bold in seeking to address the issues the project has identified
- propose an ambitious project that will have a significant impact for focus communities
- demonstrate a proven track record in delivery and outcomes
- demonstrate the ability to provide high quality evidence of results and outcomes and
- demonstrate how resources will be optimised.

3.2 Prioritisation of projects

The Assessment Panel may take into account a range of factors when recommending a list of eligible applications for grant funding. In addition to performance against the assessment criteria (**section 3.1**) the Panel may take into account:

- Ensuring an equitable geographical spread of activities across NSW
- Ensuring a balance of projects supporting metropolitan and regional NSW communities. ‘Regional NSW’ refers to all of the parts of NSW that sit outside the metropolitan areas of Greater Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong – see the Regional and Metropolitan boundaries maps at **Appendix D**.
- Ensuring an equitable spread of focus communities (**section 1.4**) will be supported
- Ensuring an even spread of single- and multi-year projects

As other grants currently administered by Women NSW focus on Pillar 1: (see **1.2.1 Economic opportunity and advancement**), priority may be given to projects targeting Pillars 2 (see **1.2.2 Health and Wellbeing**) and 3 (see **1.2.3 Participation and Empowerment**). However, competitive projects targeting Pillar 1 will also be considered.

3.3 Evidence requirements

Projects must be evidence-based. Applicants must be able to demonstrate the evidence defining the problem, that the proposed model is fit for purpose, will effectively address issue facing the focus community, and will achieve valuable and sustainable outcomes.

The evidence for both the problem and intervention should be:

- Relevant: the evidence is directly related to the problem and intervention.
- Reliable: the evidence is from a source or person that has knowledge and/or experience related to the problem and intervention. The reliability of evidence is strengthened when it can be supported through different information-gathering methods.
- Current: the evidence is up to date (provides a baseline against which change can be measured).
- Adequate: there is enough evidence to verify the existence and size of the problem, as well as the rigour and effectiveness of the intervention.

The specific problem should be articulated in terms of extent, demographics, and location.

Evidence of the problem can be demonstrated through:

- published data
- peer-reviewed published research, and/or
- independent program evaluations.

It is recognised that some innovative solutions may lack a strong evidence base, however, applicants should demonstrate and apply relevant experience, practice wisdom, and correlations with evidence from other areas. **Appendix B** contains a non-exhaustive list of sources of evidence.

4 Expression of Interest and Application process

To streamline the application process, Women NSW uses a two-stage process for Investing in Women Grants.

The first stage involves completing a short Expression of Interest (EOI) form through SmartyGrants. Applicants will not be able to apply for a grant without first submitting an Expression of Interest.

Women NSW will select a shortlist of organisations based on the Assessment criteria and invite shortlisted organisations to complete a full grant application form in the second stage of the process.

Full grant applications will go through a comprehensive assessment process to determine the successful projects.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to assist applicants with the grant application processes will be available on the 2026/27 Investing in Women grants website.

4.1 How to apply

4.1.1 Stage One - Expression of Interest Application

Eligible organisations can submit one (and only one) EOI through SmartyGrants from 10am on 17 February to 3pm on 13 March 2026. You will receive an automated email via SmartyGrants when Women NSW receives your EOI.

If an organisation submits multiple EOIs, only the first submitted EOI will be assessed and all others will be deemed ineligible.

A submitted EOI can be reopened upon request until **applications close**. To do so, email wswgrants@tco.nsw.gov.au.

We recommend applicants submit EOIs in SmartyGrants **at least two hours prior to the deadline** to ensure any attached documents upload properly. Late applications will not be accepted.

EOI applications will be assessed by Women NSW for eligibility and then scored against the assessment criteria. Shortlisted organisations will be invited to submit a full grant application.

Applicants will not be able to submit a full grant application without first submitting an EOI.

Applicants must not provide false or misleading information, and any false or misleading information will render the application ineligible.

4.1.2 Stage Two – Full Grant Application (shortlisted applicants only)

Shortlisted organisations must complete a full grant application form through SmartyGrants between 10am on 13 April to 3pm on 24 April 2026.

We recommend applicants submit forms in SmartyGrants **at least two hours prior to the deadline** in order to ensure any attached documents upload properly. Applicants have been caught out in the past being unable to submit their application in time due to slow upload times. Late applications will not be accepted.

Applications are completed and submitted online via the SmartyGrants Management portal. You will receive an automated email via SmartyGrants when Women NSW receives your application.

You have the option to create a SmartyFile profile for your organisation. SmartyFile allows organisations to collaborate with team members, pre-fill information into forms and manage, view,

search, and sort submissions across multiple funders in one spot. To learn more, go to [About SmartyFile](#).

To support greater accessibility applicants may request to submit a video response to Full Grant application questions. Women NSW staff are available to support applicants with recording and preparing a file for upload, if required.

A submitted application can be reopened upon request until **applications close**. For support to applicants or to reopen an application, email w NSW grants@tco.nsw.gov.au.

Submission of an application does not guarantee funding.

If successful, the Funding Agreement and final acquittal for the grant will be managed using the SmartyGrants portal and AdobeSign.

Applicants must not provide false or misleading information, and any false or misleading information will render the application ineligible.

4.2 Support for Applicants

4.2.1 Accessibility

To support greater accessibility applicants may request to submit an audio or video response to the application questions. Women NSW staff are available to support applicants with recording and preparing a file for upload, if required. Women NSW will document any support provided.

4.2.2 Support

For support to applicants or to reopen an application, email w NSW grants@tco.nsw.gov.au. A submitted application can be reopened upon request until applications close.

4.2.3 SmartyGrants

For technical issues related to the SmartyGrants platform please contact the support team Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm (AEDT) at:

Email: service@smartygrants.com.au

Phone: (03) 9320 6888

Applicants have the option to create a SmartyFile profile for your organisation. SmartyFile allows organisations to collaborate with team members, pre-fill information into forms and manage, view, search, and sort submissions across multiple funders in one spot. To learn more, go to [About SmartyFile](#)

5 Assessment process

5.1 Assessment of grant applications

This is an open and competitive grants program. Applicants will be assessed and scored against the assessment criteria. Applications with the highest scores are more likely to be funded.

All applications are assessed through the staged process as outlined below:

5.1.1 Stage One – Expression of Interest Application

EOIs are initially reviewed by Women NSW staff to ensure compliance with mandatory eligibility criteria and alignment with the focus communities.

Any EOI deemed ineligible will not proceed to the next stage of the assessment.

Eligible EOIs will then be shortlisted according to scores against the assessment criteria (see 3.1).

Due to the competitive nature of the Investing in Women Grants, not all EOIs that meet the assessment criteria will be shortlisted.

Recommendations of the top ranking EOIs will be approved by the Director of Women NSW.

All EOI applicants will be advised of their application outcome in writing through the SmartyGrants portal. The top ranking EOIs will be invited to submit a full grant application.

5.1.2 Stage Two – Full Grant Application Assessment

All submitted full grant applications will be assessed individually by members of the Assessment Panel against assessment criteria and given a score. Applications will then be ranked according to the total scores.

The panel will consist of qualified and experienced representatives and will include Women NSW staff and at least one independent panel member.

5.1.3 Stage Three – Assessment Panel recommendations

The Assessment panel will meet and discuss all full grant applications.

The assessment panel will then make their recommendations to the final decision maker, the Deputy Secretary, Social Policy and Intergovernmental Relations for approval.

Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of the assessment process.

5.2 Notification of application outcome

Applicants will be advised of their application outcome in writing prior to any public announcement.

Notification will also make clear how and when grants will be announced publicly.

There is no appeals process available for this Grant Program.

Announcements will not be made regarding grants awarded before the grantee has been informed.

5.3 Feedback on applications

Funding is limited and not all applications are successful. Feedback will not be provided for unsuccessful Expression of Interest applications.

Unsuccessful full grant applicants can request tailored feedback on their application delivered by the Women NSW team. You will be provided with the option to request feedback for up to two months after your unsuccessful notification.

5.4 Publication of grants information

The NSW Grants Administration Guide requires that certain information is published in relation to grants awarded no later than 45 calendar days after the grant agreement takes effect (see section 6.5 of the Guide and Appendix A to the Guide). This information is also open access information under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW) (**GIPA Act**), which must be made publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.

In accordance with these requirements, relevant information about the grants awarded will be made available on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder as soon as possible after the grant funding is approved or declined.

All records in relation to this decision will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998* (NSW).

6 Successful grant applications

Grant recipients are required to:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Enter into a funding agreement with The Cabinet Office. | Organisations funded by The Cabinet Office must operate in accordance with their funding agreement and with legislation, policies, and guidelines relevant to their project funding. |
| 2. Provide the contact details of the relevant authorised signatories, or their delegates, upon request. | Email address, phone number, name, and position |
| a. Not-for-profits | An authorised officer may be a member of the executive/committee as deemed under the Articles of Association or Constitution for a not-for-profit organisation. |
| b. Incorporated Associations | Are required to provide a copy of the resolution or delegation confirming that the signatories have the authority to execute a Deed or Contract on behalf of the Association. Also required to provide email details of witnesses to the signatories. |
| c. Australian Companies | Are required to provide evidence confirming the company's corporate legal structure by way of a paid ASIC extract. ASIC Company Extracts can be purchased online using a credit card on the ASIC website at a cost of \$10. |
| 3. Sign and return their funding agreement within two weeks of receipt. | Funding agreements can only be signed by authorised officers of your organisation. |
| 4. Ensure staff availability to complete and sign documents, to carefully read the terms and conditions of their funding agreement, and for it to be signed by the correct authorised signatories. | Important terms and conditions associated with the funding are attached to the funding agreement. |
| 5. Promptly provide an invoice. | As part of the funding agreement an invoice template is provided. |

Once the funding agreement has been executed by all relevant parties and the correct invoice received, the grant funds will be paid to the nominated bank account and a copy of the executed document will be emailed.

A meeting will then be held with the applicant to review Investing in Women Grant expectations and requirements and to answer any outstanding questions from the applicant.

Grant recipients should not make public announcements about their project without prior approval from Women NSW. Once you have been notified that the grant is no longer under embargo, you can announce your success with the grant.

6.1 Project evaluation

If successful, a Project and Evaluation Plan including key performance indicators (KPIs), data collection methods and timeframes will be required as the first deliverable for the project.

The evaluation should include a process and outcome evaluation at a minimum. An economic evaluation which may include a cost-benefit analysis, is optional.

A process evaluation looks at how a project worked and whether the project activities have been implemented as intended.

An outcome evaluation seeks to evaluate the extent to which a project meets its goals or objectives. Outcomes evaluation should include both quantitative data (numerical measurements of change) and qualitative data (assessments of how perceptions, attitudes and beliefs have changed).

6.2 Variations to the approved funding activity

Any variations to the proposal for which a grant has been awarded, including project scope or activities, location or timeframes outlined in the application form and grant program guidelines must be submitted in writing for approval from Women NSW. Unapproved variations may result in the withdrawal of the grant offer or termination of the funding agreement. Approved variations may require amendment to the funding agreement, if the agreement has already been executed.

6.3 Unspent funds

Organisations must not use the money provided for the project, nor any interest earned on the money, for any other purpose beyond what is specified in the approved submitted application.

Organisations must not carry over funds provided for the approved project, to other programs, events, or organisational operating budgets. All grant monies are required to be spent on the approved project or the funds must be returned.

6.4 Advertising and promotion

Successful grant recipients are responsible for the promotion and advertising of their project.

Grant recipients must use the official NSW Government branding on all promotional and advertising materials relating to their grant-funded activities.

Grant recipients agree to information about the project being used for evaluation, promotional and media purposes. Should your application be successful, The Cabinet Office (Women NSW) may need to provide certain information to the media and Members of Parliament for promotional activities.

Grant recipients agree to obtain consent from participants for still and moving images of participants captured by project staff and provided to The Cabinet Office. Appropriate consent documentation will be provided to successful grant recipients.

Grant recipients acknowledge that the information provided in the application, and any images of the project provided to The Cabinet Office, may be used in media and promotional activities such as publishing case studies, social media, and website content, and/or media releases.

Successful applicants are required to acknowledge the financial support by the NSW Government.

The Cabinet Office may also publish overarching information about grants awarded including the name of the grant, a description of the grant, the number of grant recipients, the total value of the grant opportunity and the decision-maker.

6.5 Reporting and acquittal requirements

A written report on progress, including progress against Key Project Indicators will be required, to support the monitoring of project delivery.

All reporting will be submitted online through SmartyGrants by the dates specified in the funding agreement.

All projects must be delivered, and funds expended by the agreed project end date.

Grant recipients must provide Women NSW with a Final Acquittal Report. Women NSW will send the form prior to the required date for you to complete and submit online through SmartyGrants by the date specified in the funding agreement. If an acquittal is not received by the due date, Women NSW may request that funding be returned within 28 days.

Organisations must retain all financial records related to grant expenditure and acquittals for seven years. If the organisation's committee changes, these documents must be forwarded to the new incoming committee.

6.6 Insurance

All grant-funded activities must be covered by Public Liability Insurance.

Your organisation is required to provide a valid Certificate of Currency for Public Liability Insurance with a minimum cover of \$10 million in the name of the applicant before funding can be released.

7 Additional information and resources

7.1 Disclaimer

Submission of an application **does not** guarantee funding. Previously successful applicants are not guaranteed funding.

Women NSW accepts no responsibility for the project, irrespective of the funding provided by the agency to support the project, and irrespective of its listing on the NSW Women's website or other Women NSW publications.

Organisations are responsible for meeting their duty of care and all other obligations to project participants, volunteers, and other stakeholders. Organisations should give due consideration to the safety of any children, young people or other vulnerable people involved in their project.

The Office of the Children's Guardian can provide advice on child safety. Organisations who do not usually work with children or young people should consider partnering with an organisation or other stakeholder who does have expertise in child safety.

7.2 Complaint handling

Any concerns about the grant should be submitted in writing to [The Cabinet Office](#).

The Cabinet Office is committed to responding to external complaints fairly, efficiently, and effectively. Concerns and complaints procedures follow the processes set out in the Cabinet Office external complaints handling policy available at [Complaints policy](#).

7.3 Access to information

The NSW Grants Administration Guide requires that certain information is published in relation to grants awarded no later than 45 calendar days after the grant agreement takes effect (see section 6.4 of the Guide and Appendix A to the Guide). This information is also open access information under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW) (**GIPA Act**), which must be made publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.

In accordance with these requirements, relevant information about the grants awarded will be made available on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder as soon as possible after the grant funding is approved or declined. Information received in applications and in respect of applications is treated as confidential. All funding decisions and assessment outcomes are to be kept confidential until announces and applicants notified. However, documents in the possession of the Government are subject to the provisions of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*. Under some circumstances a copy of the application form and other material supplied by the applicant may be released, subject to the deletion of exempt material, in response to a request made in accordance with the Act.

Note that documents submitted as part of a grant application may be subject to an application under the GIPA Act or an order for papers under Standing Order 52.

7.4 Conflict of interest management

Any real or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise during the assessment process are effectively managed and disclosed. Risks are managed in accordance with The Cabinet Office systems for risk management. Risk is also mitigated through the guidelines. Fraud controls are in place around conflicts of interest management. Any conflicts of interest are required to be declared

and managed in accordance with the Cabinet Office Code of Conduct. Risk management will occur throughout the grant life cycle.

7.5 Confidentiality

Successful applicants may be required to keep the outcome of the application process confidential until the Government makes a public announcement.

Women NSW follows all requirements of confidentiality required as part of the grants administration and assessment process as outlined in the [NSW Grants Administration Guide](#).

8 Appendices

Appendix A – Investing in Women Project Logic template

[The Investing in Women Project logic](#) is a structured framework that outlines the relationship between a project's objectives, input, activities, outputs, outcomes, impacts and benefits, helping to ensure clarity and coherence in planning and execution. It illustrates how resources are used to achieve desired results and identifies key assumptions and risks.

Appendix B - Sources of evidence

Below is a non-exhaustive list of resources which can be used as a starting point to gather evidence for a specific problem (i.e. the need for the intervention), as well as the evidence that the specific intervention (your project proposal) is fit for purpose and will address the identified problem.

[Australian Bureau of Statistics \(ABS\) Gender Indicators, Australia](#)

[Australian Institute of Family Studies \(AIFS\)](#)

[NSW Gender Equality Budget Statement 2023-24](#)

[NSW Gender Equality Dashboard](#)

Appendix C - Project Evaluation

Premier's Department Evaluation Toolkit

[The Evaluation Toolkit](#) provides advice and resources for planning and conducting a program evaluation.

NSW Government Program Evaluation Guidelines

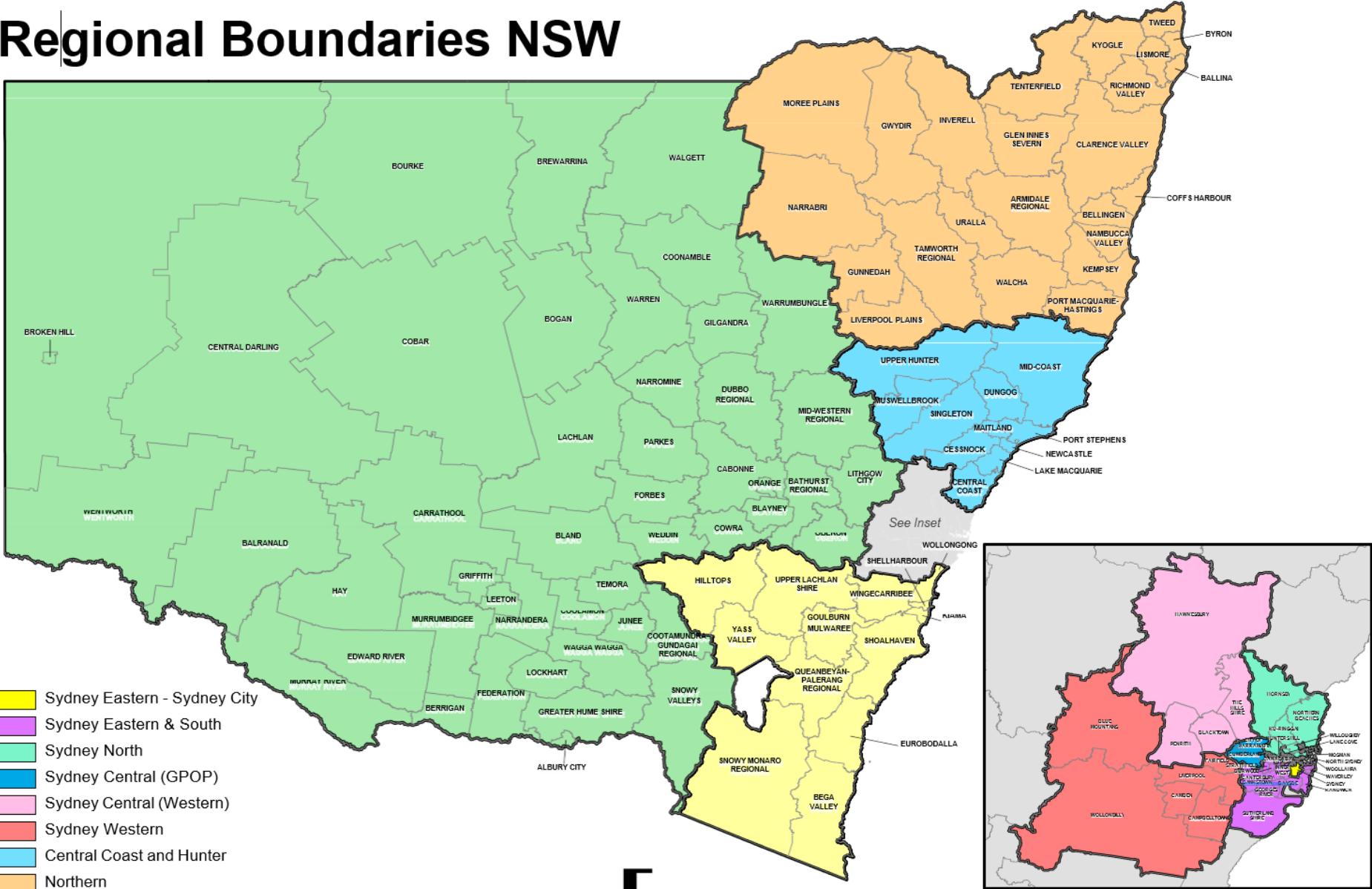
[The Program Evaluation Guidelines](#) outline best practice principles to plan and conduct program evaluations.

Appendix D – NSW Regions

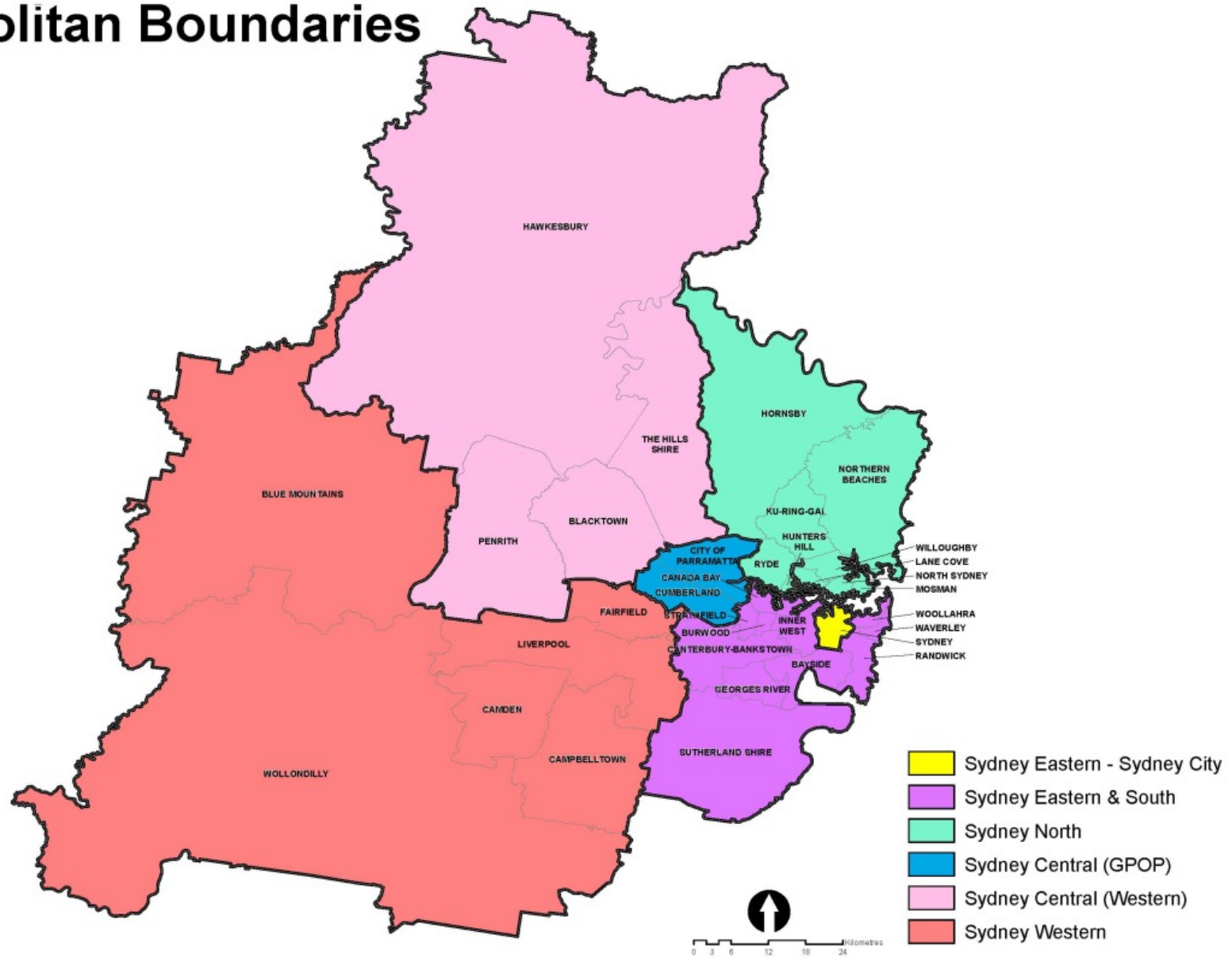
For the purposes of this grant, 'regional NSW' refers to all of the parts of NSW that sit outside the metropolitan areas of Greater Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong. See the maps on the following two pages.

For further clarity please read our [Frequently Asked Questions \(pdf\)](#)

Regional Boundaries NSW



Metropolitan Boundaries



The Cabinet Office

52 Martin Place
Sydney NSW 2000

GPO Box 5341
Sydney NSW 2001

Office hours:
Monday to Friday
9.00am – 5.00pm

E: WNSWGrants@tco.nsw.gov.au

W: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/women-nsw>



OFFICIAL