



Australian Government
**Department of Immigration
and Citizenship**

Guidelines for Community Relations Projects

2008

Strengthening Community Relations

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1 COMMUNITY RELATIONS FUNDING PROGRAM

1.1 Introduction

The Australian Government is committed to addressing issues of cultural, racial and religious intolerance by promoting respect, fairness, inclusion and a sense of belonging for everyone.

The Australian Government believes that communities are in the best position to recognise and address issues of racism and intolerance. The Community Relations funding program is designed to provide the additional resources often needed by not for profit community organisations to develop their own projects and find their own ways of helping all Australians to build stronger community relations.

The Government believes that strong social cohesion is best developed by projects that bring all Australians together and in particular create connections across the community.

This year \$1.5 million has been set aside for community relations activities. These guidelines set out the requirements for 'major' projects of between \$5000 and \$50 000.

Of the \$1.5 million available, \$100 000 has been set aside to assist small organisations that may not be ready to manage major projects. Under this new arrangement, amounts of up to \$5000 (before GST) will be available for less complex projects that will require less reporting. See *Community Relations Small Grants Program Guidelines for 2008* for information about these small grants (at www.harmony.gov.au).

1.2 Objectives of the Program

The objectives of the Australian Government's community relations funding program include the promotion of:

- the importance of all Australians respecting one another regardless of cultural, racial or religious difference;
- the fair treatment of all Australians, encouraging people to recognise that our interactions should be accepting of and responsive to people's backgrounds, circumstances, needs and preferences;
- opportunities for people to participate in Australian society and to understand the rights and responsibilities that we share as part of that society;
- a sense of belonging for everyone by helping communities work towards a peaceful, progressive and prosperous future; and
- understanding and acceptance by the broader community of Australia's changing demographics.

2 APPLYING FOR PROJECT FUNDING IN 2008

2.1 How to apply

The Community Relations project funding will employ a two-stage application process:

- Stage One: Expression of Interest;
- Stage Two: Supplementary Application (by invitation).

These guidelines provide advice and will inform the process for completing both the Expression of Interest and the Supplementary Application.

Applicants should read through these guidelines completely to gain a thorough understanding of all assessment criteria before completing the Expression of Interest.

2.2 Expression of Interest

Applicants must complete an Expression of Interest, providing information about their organisation, the issue they are seeking to address, their strategy and activities that they plan to undertake, the community support available and the level of funding sought.

It is important that applicants completing this Expression of Interest also understand the requirements in the remaining assessment criteria so that they are in a position to competently complete the Supplementary Application if short-listed for further consideration. Broader understanding of the assessment criteria will assist applicants in developing their project proposals.

The number of applicants short-listed to submit the Supplementary Application will be determined by assessing the Expression of Interest against the relevant criteria. In 2007, 391 Expressions of Interest were submitted with 101 short-listed for further consideration, and 41 projects receiving funding.

2.3 Closing date for Expressions of Interest

Expressions of Interest must be emailed to communityrelationsfunding@immi.gov.au by 6pm EST 23 May 2008. No late applications will be accepted.

2.4 What happens next?

After the closing date, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) will undertake an assessment of all Expressions of Interest received. Recommendations will be put to the Minister of Immigration and Citizenship, who will approve a shortlist of applications.

Applicants short-listed for further consideration will be contacted and invited to submit further details of their project work plan, budget and to provide evidence of community support and capacity to manage the project.

If short-listed, applicants will be given four weeks to provide the Supplementary Application and other information requested. The Department will then undertake a further assessment to determine the applicants recommended for funding.

2.5 What do you have to do?

It is the responsibility of applicants to submit a clear and complete application within the specified timeframes.

Applicants are also responsible for promptly advising the Department if there are any changes to the information provided in the Expression of Interest or Supplementary Application, or any other changes that will affect their application.

2.6 How long does it take?

The following timeline for the 2008 Community Relations Projects funding is indicative only. It is provided as a guide to assist applicants to plan their project and prepare their applications.

Late April 2008	Funding round advertised.
Late May 2008	Closing date for Expressions of Interest.
July 2008	Short-listed and unsuccessful applicants advised.
Late July 2008	Closing date for Supplementary Applications.
Late August 2008	Successful applicants announced.
September/October 2008	Funding agreements negotiated.
November/December 2008	Projects commence.
December 2009	All projects are completed.

3 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The following assessment criteria are used in assessing Community Relations project applications. The criteria refer to the organisation's eligibility and capacity to manage the project, the relevance of the proposal to the program and priority target areas, the type of project proposed as well as the level of community support for the proposal.

3.1 Eligible Organisation - Who can apply?

Eligible organisations

Funds will be provided to incorporated, not-for-profit organisations.

Groups such as school communities, non-profit foundations, service clubs, sporting bodies, ethnic communities, youth organisations, local government authorities, universities and colleges of education are invited to submit proposals (government school applicants need not be incorporated). Evidence of the organisation's incorporation and not-for-profit status will be required if short-listed.

Ineligible organisations

Applicants should not be:

- individuals;
- political organisations;
- un-incorporated organisations (with the exception of government schools).

Government agencies

Australian and State Government agencies can participate in the projects as advisers but not as funding recipients.

3.2 Eligible Project and Priority Areas - What we fund?

Eligible projects

Project submissions must:

- directly address the community relations program objectives;
- only involve activities taking place entirely within Australia;
- seek funds of between \$5000 and \$50 000; and
- be completed by the end of December 2009.

All projects will be expected to address issues of racial, cultural or religious intolerance by involving a cross-section of the population in activities to promote respect, fairness, inclusion and a sense of belonging.

Funding applicants should demonstrate why the project is important in the particular community and how it could specifically address the identified issue.

Priorities:

In 2008, the department is particularly interested in projects that address any of the following priority areas:

Children and young people

Activities could include:

- projects in schools, including English language and specialised schools, especially those that involve parents, community leaders and elders;
- life skills and leadership development for young people, including through mentoring by other young people, adults of different backgrounds or successful migrants;
- projects and partnerships involving state/territory legal authorities such as the police and Police Citizen Youth Clubs; and
- projects which engage refugee youth in civic participation with the broader community.

New and emerging communities

Activities could include:

- community based activities that increase understanding and acceptance by the broader community of changing demographics in local government areas, rural and regional centres;
- mentoring or encounters involving men in which they share experiences, explore cultural misunderstandings and discuss the role of men in Australian society; and
- established and older migrant organisations helping emerging communities set up representative incorporated bodies and training for promising leaders.

Integration and community based activities

Activities could include:

- interfaith education and community/cultural bridge-building through activities such as outreach programs;
- Sport, art, music, multimedia or other activities geared toward youth encounters and exploration of diversity issues; and
- projects that bring people together to cooperate on promoting common community interests such as bush fire control, the provision of emergency services and involvement with volunteer agencies.

Indigenous people

- Activities that encourage Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to work together on community relations projects in urban, rural and regional locations.

Other Issues:

Projects that address other community relations issues consistent with the objectives of the program or adopt other approaches will be given full consideration, including:

- inter-generational and cross cultural ‘skill exchange’, for example encounters where senior citizens share their knowledge of Australia’s history, culture and language with migrant youth who, in turn, share knowledge with or assist senior citizens;
- projects that promote diversity and address issues of intolerance in the workplace;
- projects developed by ‘established’ or ‘mainstream’ organisations that seek to actively promote a culture of inclusiveness; and
- projects that combine several of the priority areas such as activities that bring together the broader community with young people and new and emerging communities.

It is important that project proposals include clear ways to develop and sustain links between people of all backgrounds, and ways to sustain project outcomes beyond the period of the project. For example ‘established’ or ‘mainstream’ organisations that seek to develop and implement projects that are proactively inclusive will be considered for funding.

Ineligible projects

Funding will **not** be available for:

- continuation of existing activities or current functions of an organisation;
- retrospective or deficit funding for projects already under way or completed;
- subsidy of general ongoing administrative costs (eg electricity, rent) of an organisation (but a worker may be employed specifically for the project);
- cultural activities of a single ethnic, religious or racial group (eg funds for concert performance, instruments, costumes, dance performances);
- major capital expenditure such as on buildings, motor vehicles, computers, sound systems etc (although equipment can be hired for project work);

- projects which are essentially about employment, health, welfare or settlement-service provision (casework and assistance to access mainstream services);
- projects focused solely on accessing services (raising cross-cultural awareness amongst service providers can be part of a project but must not be the only activity/objective);
- projects which are focussed in the main on curriculum development, academic research or teacher development (but educational institutions may apply for funds for innovative projects to raise awareness of and involvement in relevant issues);
- translations/reprinting of existing materials or publication of existing manuscripts;
- travel to conferences and short training programs.

3.3 Project Strategy – What will you do?

Applications must clearly identify an issue and the proposed response.

Preference will be given to projects with the greatest potential for forming positive, long-term outcomes. Projects should involve the broader community, bringing people together to explore issues and develop meaningful community relationships over a sustained period of time (up to 12 months).

Activities that involve significant numbers from the local community will be favoured above projects involving small numbers of people (eg less than 20). Project activities that are likely to attract interest from local media, and therefore are able to promote respect, fairness, inclusion and a sense of belonging more broadly are also encouraged.

Festivals, performances and cultural events tend not to achieve these aims and will not be funded in isolation.

This program encourages innovation in the design and execution of project proposals. To that end, organisations are encouraged to ‘think outside the square’ in terms of developing proposals.

All projects must focus on active participation and involvement of the people they plan to reach. Projects can have a significant impact in a local community if they are well designed, supported and managed.

3.4 Community and Stakeholder Support – Who will work with you?

Applicants need to have the support of the organisations and people that will help the project to succeed.

In previous years the more successful projects have been those that have enjoyed continued community and stakeholder involvement and support for their activities. The nature of stakeholders can vary from project to project, but could include individuals such as key community leaders and organisations critical to the project’s success, including other community organisations, the relevant local school or council.

Local Indigenous support

Projects that have an Indigenous focus or component must have the explicit agreement and support for the project from the appropriate local elders and Indigenous organisations. It should be noted that this support can take time to secure.

Project Steering Committee (or Reference Group)

Organisations will be expected to manage their funded projects through a steering committee comprising members drawn from several other community organisations and representing relevant stakeholders in the project. Steering committee members should be contactable by the Department if the need arises. Steering committees normally meet monthly, or more frequently as the need arises.

Letters of Support

When completing the Expression of Interest form organisations will be asked to indicate whether they have consulted with the relevant stakeholders in the project and identified representatives for the project steering committee. You will also be asked to indicate whether they support the project, or whether their support is still to be confirmed (eg community groups may be discussing the project proposal amongst themselves before providing a final commitment to support the project).

Short-listed organisations will be expected to substantiate their claims by providing evidence of stakeholder and steering committee support and participation. Letters of support are the usual way in which this evidence is provided. Community support should show commitment to and participation in the project proposed by the applicant.

Who will learn from the project?

Organisations will be asked to detail the anticipated reach of the project both directly and indirectly (i.e. the number of people directly influenced by the project and those exposed to the broader community relations message). Participation includes the number of people directly involved in a project, including coordinators, administrators and participants in training forums, workshops and the like, and others who directly participated in activities. Outreach includes all other people who may have received messages including audiences at events, radio listeners, and print media readers.

Projects will be favoured which can demonstrate substantial reach in terms of the outcomes of the project and the promotion of the Community Relations funding objectives, although the comparative situation of remote and rural communities will be taken into account.

3.5 Project Work Plan - How will you make it work?

In the Supplementary Application, short-listed applicants will be asked to provide a detailed project work plan. The work plan section of the Supplementary Application is where organisations will detail how their proposed strategies will link to the objectives of the project and how they will know if they have realised their objectives.

It is important that organisations develop a comprehensive and practical work plan that includes clear and achievable timelines, milestones and outcomes. The milestones should be relevant, achievable and clearly measurable, as the funding will be paid in instalments and payments will depend on achieving the agreed milestones. Organisations should note that project milestones are usually linked to an interim report and a final report.

The projects should be as widely applicable as possible, so that their model can be followed by other agencies or organisations. In this way, the impact of projects can be spread widely. There should be a clear, relevant and achievable distribution plan for any products developed during the life of the project.

As part of the acquittal requirements, funding recipients will be required to evaluate and report on the overall outcomes of the project in terms of meeting the program objectives, its impact on the community and to provide evidence that the project was carried out as agreed.

Funding recipients will report in terms of the project-specific performance indicators identified in their application work plans and milestones. In addition, the Australian Government may identify program-wide performance indicators to be reported on by funding recipients.

3.6 Harmony Day and Funded Community Projects

Applicants should note that Harmony Day is an integral part of the Community Relations program. Harmony Day is an opportunity for local communities and groups to celebrate the success of Australia's cultural diversity and our shared values. Harmony Day is a day to understand and commit to the benefits of living in a country that embraces common values of respect, fairness, participation, acceptance and a fair go for all.

Funding recipients are expected to include a Harmony Day activity within their project, and should consider how they can use Harmony Day as a way of increasing exposure within the community of the issues addressed in their projects. **It should be noted however that Harmony Day activities should cost no more than 5 per cent of the total project budget.**

While Harmony Day is held on and around 21 March each year, the messages of the Community Relations program are conveyed all year round, including through the work of the community relations projects.

There are also other communication obligations successful applicants must comply with and which are set out in the funding agreement.

3.7 Budget and Funding - How much will it cost?

Organisations will be required to outline major budget items in their Expression of Interest, and to provide a detailed budget in their Supplementary Application. The budget must be reasonable and appropriate to the project strategy and objectives.

Note that the principle 'value for money' will guide consideration of project budgets.

Identified budget expenses must include:

- salary costs (plus on costs);
- public liability insurances for the life of the project, coverage at \$10 million minimum (if the proposed activities are not covered by the organisation's existing public liability insurance) from an insurer authorised to conduct insurance business in Australia.

For most projects, salary costs should be less than 50 per cent of the total project budget.

Fundraising activities should not be used as a means of supplementing the project budget. For example, an organisation seeking funding for a project that involves events should not charge admission fees. Similarly, any materials produced by the project should be distributed free of charge.

Other funding

If the organisation applies for, or receives, other funding for the proposed project, the Department should be notified immediately so that this can be taken into account in the application assessment. Please note that if the project is contingent upon other funding sources being received, the other funding must be verified prior to the Community Relations funding being awarded.

In-kind support

Organisations may wish to identify any 'in-kind' or non financial support for their project if appropriate.

3.8 Project Management Capacity - Can you manage the work?

The capacity of the organisation to successfully manage community relations projects is a key criterion in assessing applications. Community relations or community development projects are those that enjoy strong community participation in their conception and delivery. They focus on outcomes that strengthen a sense of community harmony and address social issues.

Organisations are required to demonstrate their capabilities in this area by providing evidence of previous projects of this nature, successfully delivered on-time and within budget. Please note that the information supplied in applications may be shared, on a confidential basis, with other relevant agencies, particularly to assess your organisation's project management capacity.

Management committee (note: different from steering committee)

The Supplementary Application seeks some details of the members of the management committee. An organisation's management committee will fulfil a critical role in supporting the project and in ensuring that the project and funds are well managed. We are therefore interested in gaining an understanding of the make-up and stability of the organisation's management committee.

3.9 Financial Management Capacity – Can you manage the funds?

In the Supplementary Application organisations must be able to demonstrate a sound administrative and financial base. They must be able to comply with all reporting and

financial accountability requirements as set out in the funding agreement, in a timely manner and to a high standard and to the satisfaction of the Department. Evidence of the organisation's past financial management will be required. This evidence will include copies of the organisation's most recent annual report and annual audited financial statement.

Past receipt and management of government funding will be relevant. If an organisation has not had previous funding, it is possible for the organisation to demonstrate their capacity to manage project funding, using their previous financial management experience.

4 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

4.1 What makes a good project?

The program funds a range of projects across diverse target areas. Experience has shown that the better quality projects are those that understand, or seek to understand the issues they are trying to address and target those issues through a realistic project. Given the community relations focus of the program, community support is essential for projects to succeed.

We favour projects that involve people from different backgrounds in activities that create positive relationships which are likely to continue when the project is completed. Examples of projects funded in the past include the *Valuing Difference - Promoting Harmony* project funded in 2006 which responded to the increased number of primary industry and health sector professionals migrating to Kerang in rural Victoria. These people included families of Indian, Sri-Lankan, Sudanese, Argentinean, Brazilian and Asian backgrounds. The project strategy centred on members of the Kerang community becoming volunteers and being trained in cross-cultural communication to become mentors for new migrants. The project also produced eight digital stories of the new arrivals' experiences.

In another example, a project by Strathfield South High School in 2007-08, titled *We are all Australian*, responded to the alienation being experienced by young people of Middle Eastern backgrounds in schools in Western Sydney. The project brought together students from Strathfield High School and Windsor High School and produced a DVD about young Australian's of Lebanese and Asian backgrounds getting to know students of Anglo-Saxon backgrounds and the issues they explored together. Created by the students, the film examined stereotypes with particular emphasis on how Muslims, Lebanese and Asian groups are represented. The film also looked at how stereotypes are manipulated throughout history and in the media. The film was accompanied by a teaching resource kit for distribution into schools, containing a series of structured activity questions based on subjects in the film including racism, stereotyping, discrimination and religion.

Examples of projects can be found at http://www.harmony.gov.au/grants/2007_grants.htm.

4.2 Where can you find help?

If you have questions or require assistance in developing an idea for a project, please contact:

- the application hotline, 1800 782 002 or
- e-mail: communityrelationsfunding@immi.gov.au

4.3 What about other funding sources?

If your project does not meet these guidelines for funding, other funding sources might be identified by consulting:

- The Australian Government's Grantslink website, www.grantslink.gov.au;
- www.grantsearch.com.au; and
- www.ourcommunity.com.au.

4.4 What if you are awarded funding?

If you are awarded funding for your project, the Department will negotiate a funding agreement (contract) based upon your successful project proposal and the amount of funding awarded.

The contractual arrangement will require acknowledgement of the Australian Government's support in all material associated with the project. All material that is created during and for the project must be cleared by the Department prior to being used.

Funding payments

The awarded funding will be paid in instalments. The first payment (normally 50%) will be made once a funding agreement has been negotiated and signed by the Department and the funding recipient.

The request for the second grant payment (normally 40%) must be accompanied by an activity report and certified financial statement and will follow completion of agreed project milestones.

For projects of less than \$20 000 the organisation is to provide an income and expenditure statement, and for projects of \$20 000 or more an audited financial statement is required at the completion of the project. This can be prepared by the organisation and audited (signed with a declaration) by a qualified accountant. The items reported have to be in the same categories as the agreed budget.

The funded organisation must have sufficient resources to finalise the project before the final payment (usually 10%) is made. The request for the final payment must be presented as soon as possible after the completion of the project and be accompanied by the final report, the self-evaluation report and an income and expenditure statement or audited financial statement for the completed project.