



ABORIGINAL HOUSING OFFICE

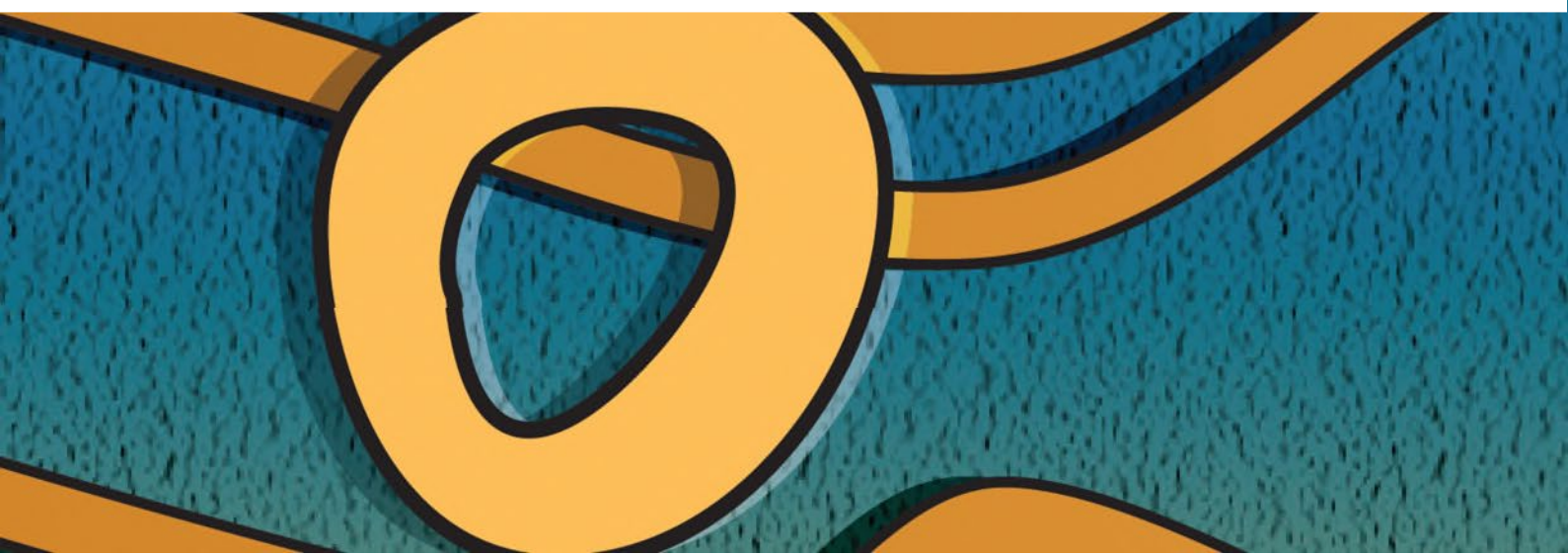
Sector Capability Grant Program FY25/26

Grant Applications

Closing Date:	5pm – Friday 2 May 2025
Place for Lodgement:	SectorDevelopment@aho.nsw.gov.au
Grant Issue Date:	Monday 31 March 2025
Contact Officer:	Kashana Naiyaga
Email:	SectorDevelopment@aho.nsw.gov.au



Aboriginal
Housing
Office



Conditions for Application

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1 GENERAL

1.1 Introduction to the Aboriginal Housing Office

Aboriginal Housing Office is State Government owned. The Aboriginal Housing Office Trust (**AHO**) is a legal entity established by *The Aboriginal Housing Office Trust Act 1961* and is responsible for the operation and maintenance of Aboriginal Housing Office.

1.2 Funding Program Overview

A key initiative of the Strong Family Strong Communities (SFSC) strategy is the Sector Capability Fund. This grant program supports Aboriginal Community Housing Providers (ACHPs) with improving their business growth, sustainability, compliance and supporting tenants by providing culturally appropriate and responsive housing to Aboriginal people across NSW.

The AHO are allocating \$1,500,000 to the Sector Capability Fund for FY25/26. To issue Grants effectively and efficiently to ACHPs, the AHO will invite all known ACHPs and providers who are scheduled or undertaking registration with the Registrar of Community Housing (RCH), to apply for funding in relation to the Program Objectives under a Grant Application process through SmartyGrants.

There will be only one category available to applicants:

- Grants up to \$100,000

Submitting an application will not guarantee funding. Allocation of Grant funds will be assessed based on applications meeting the Program Eligibility Criteria and Objectives, ACHP need and their ability to deliver, and total funding pool available. The ACHPs that are selected for funding will be managed under a Funding Agreement with support from the AHO through the engagement and delivery process.

Applications and assessment outcomes from the Grant Application process may be used for future funding opportunities.

1.2.1 Objectives for Sector Capability Grant

The objectives for the Sector Capability Grant funding are outlined below:

- Building on the foundations and momentum of the **SFSC, AHO's 10-year Housing Strategy – Sector Growth (Pillar 3)** initiatives to improve housing outcomes
- Advance community led objectives and targets outlined in Closing the Gap or the sector nominated Top 10 Priorities
- Demonstrate the NSW Government's & AHO's commitment to providing culturally appropriate support and improve tenant experience and outcomes
- Support the Aboriginal housing sector to increase their capability and capacity, providing workforce development, and increasing long-term viability
- Support ACHPs to increase their capability and capacity to maintain dwellings across NSW in accordance with the AHO Asset Management Framework.
- Assist with registering and maintaining the registration of ACHPs to ensure they meet the requirements to provide housing services in accordance with the NRSCH / NSWLS Performance outcomes, AHO Provider Performance Framework and individual Management Agreements
- Assist with issues relating to ACHP performance and compliance in accordance with the AHO Provider Performance Framework (including Asset Management Framework)

- Spread funding across suitable ACHPs with cost limited to \$100,000 per applicant (GST inclusive)
- To manage a fair, transparent, and auditable process in the identification of suitable ACHPs and the allocation of funding.

1.2.2 Activities that can be Funded Through the Program

Activities to be funded may include access to hardware, software, operational resources, or consultancy to support registration and / or continued compliance and tenant engagement.

Examples as per below, and please refer to Table A in [Supporting Information](#) for guidance and further information:

- Legal advice and /or support
- Operational Resources
- Recruitment
- Professional development
- Organisational infrastructure development
- Build or strengthening business enablers
- Financial modelling
- Tenancy management systems and processes
- Sustainable housing outcomes
- Access to hardware, software
- Consultancy to support registration and/or continued compliance
- Tenant engagement
- Consultancy to support funding applications

Please note that the grant is a one-off payment and the AHO will not be able to fund ongoing costs of the purchased goods / services.

1.2.3 Eligibility for Funding

ACHPs must meet the eligibility criteria and the project criteria for expenditure to be considered eligible:

- Must be an ACHP; and
- Respondents must be registered under the NRSCH or NSWLS, or
- Scheduled to undertake or currently undertaking registration; and
- Must be located in NSW
- **Must complete and submit** the application form via SmartyGrants, applications submitted in alternate avenues will not be considered.

Aboriginal Community Housing Organisation's (ACHO's) and AHO Transitional Registered providers are not eligible.

1.3 Funding Program Phasing

The AHO will invite Aboriginal Community Housing Providers (ACHPs) to apply for funding in relation to the program under this Grant Application process.

The Grant Applications will identify suitable ACHPs for the assessment and potential allocation of funding in achieving or maintaining the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) Registration or NSW Local Scheme (NSWLS) Registration, improving their business growth, sustainability, compliance and supporting tenants by providing culturally appropriate and responsive housing to Aboriginal people across NSW.

ACHP's that are identified through the Grant Application process, that miss out on funding through this program will be collated, assessed, and potentially used for future funding opportunities. The AHO recognises the challenges of lack of funding within ACHPs and addressing these funding restraints requires collaborative efforts, innovative solutions, and sustainable strategies.

The number of selected ACHPs and estimated value of each funding allocation will be determined through this procurement process.

2 SECTOR CAPABILITY GRANT PROGRAM – PROCUREMENT PROCESS

AHO is seeking Grant Applications from suitable Aboriginal Community Housing Providers.

The objective of the Grant Application process is to identify Aboriginal Community Housing Providers that meet the eligibility criteria to participate in the Sector Capability Grant Program.

Phase 1: Application Process

The first stage is Grant Applications from Aboriginal Community Housing Providers (ACHPs) that meet the eligibility criteria for the Sector Capability Grant Program.

Submissions from Aboriginal Community Housing Providers will determine eligibility and the funding required.

The evaluation panel will make recommendations for the Funding Deeds based on the program objectives, eligibility for funding and delivery capability to rank eligible ACHPs. ACHPs identified but not recommended for funding will be captured by AHO for consideration in future funding programs.

Phase 2 – Funding Deed, support and delivery of ACHPs

The award of a Funding Deed is not a procurement process and at the discretion of AHO to make the final determination on the outcomes from the Grant Application process.

A Funding Deed will be awarded to each successful ACHP with delivery of program to be managed by awarded party, responsibilities include:

- Agreed Activity Plan
- Grants up to \$100,000 will be paid in the following instalments.
 - Sixty percent (60%) of the Funding will be paid upon the signing of this agreement.
 - Twenty percent (20%) of the Funding will be paid based on achievements of milestones.
 - The remaining twenty percent (20%) of the Funding will be paid based on achievements of milestones. Timing of the payments will be aligned with the satisfactory receipt and review of Progress Reports and one (1) final report.
- Final report within one month after the End Date with a signed statement verifying

that the Funding has been spent in accordance with the Funding Agreement, plus any receipts for expenditure of the Funding.

A copy of the draft Funding Deed is provided as **Attachment 1 – AHO Funding Agreement (Short Form) – Sector Grant Program - DRAFT.**

2.1 Contact Person

Refer all requests for information about this Grant Application process to the following Contact Person:

Name: Kashana Naiyaga

Position: Contact Officer

e-mail: SectorDevelopment@aho.nsw.gov.au

2.2 Indicative Timetable

An indicative timetable for the completion of the Grant Application process and funding award funding is as follows:

Activity	Target Start Date	Target Finish Date
Phase 1 – Expression of Interest Process		
Grant Application issued and close	31 March 2025	2 May 2025
Grant Applications Assessment	5 May 2025	26 May 2025
Approval of Assessment Report	26 May 2025	9 June 2025
Phase 2 – Funding Award and Delivery		
Sector Capability Grant Program Award	9 June 2025	23 June 2025
Agreements Signed and Returned	23 June 2025	4 July 2025
Manage and monitor delivery	4 July 2025	31 June 2025

2.3 NSW Government Procurement Policy Framework

Applicants must comply with the NSW Government Procurement Policy Framework which can be found in the NSW Government buy.nsw website.

Applicants must complete and lodge the Grant in accordance with the Supplier Code of Conduct.

Lodgement of a Grant is evidence of an applicant's agreement to comply with the Code during the Request for Application process and any subsequent tendering process. If an applicant fails to comply with the Code, its application may be passed over.

3 FURTHER INFORMATION

3.1 Addenda to this Grant

The AHO may issue an instruction amending the Grant Application, as a result of an applicant's request for clarification or any other reason. Any such instruction will be issued in writing in the form of an Addendum, which becomes part of this Grant Application. Written Addenda issued by the AHO are the only recognised explanations of, or amendments to, the Grant Applications documents.

Applicants who didn't get the Grant documents from NSW Grant Finder and SmartyGrants should inform the Contact Person before applying to ensure they have all Addenda and updated requirements.

3.2 Disclaimer

The AHO is not committed contractually in any way to those applicants whose applications are accepted. The issue of this Grant does not commit or otherwise oblige the AHO to proceed with any part or steps of the process.

Whilst the information contained in this Grant Application has been formulated with all due care, the AHO does not warrant or represent that the information is free from errors or omissions. The information is made available on the understanding that the AHO and its respective employees and agents, shall have no liability (including liability by reason of negligence) for any loss, damage, cost or expense incurred or arising by reason of any person using or relying on the information and whether caused by reason of any error, omission or misrepresentation in the information or otherwise.

Furthermore, the AHO takes no responsibility for the accuracy, currency, reliability and correctness of any information included in this Grant Application.

4 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

4.1 Eligibility Criteria

All applicants are required to complete the SmartyGrants Application Form – Sector Capability Grant Program. If applicants do not complete and submit this form via SmartyGrants, they will not be considered for funding.

Applicants may apply for the program by demonstrating that they meet the eligibility criteria, as follows:

Criteria	Considerations	Eligibility
Funding Amount Requested		
1	Up to \$100,000 (incl. GST)	
Compliance Assessment		
2	Applicants must be a registered ACHP for the duration of the project.	Yes / No
3	Must be registered under or NSWLS; or Currently scheduled to undertake; or Is currently undertaking NRSCH/ NSWLS Registration.	Yes / No
4	Located in New South Wales	Yes / No
Assessment		
5	Must meet requirements of Sector Capability Grant Funding Objectives	Yes / No
Weighted Criteria		Weighting
6	Quality and Detail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The activity request aligns with the project aims and objectives of improving business growth, sustainability, compliance and supporting tenants. ○ Project activities clearly demonstrate they address specific project objectives. ○ Detailed description of activities. ○ Rationale for need. 	25%
7	Benefits and Measures of Success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clearly outlines how the activity will benefit and have positive outcomes for the provider / tenants. ○ Clearly outlines the desired outcomes. 	25%
8	Cultural Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outlines how the grant will benefit tenants and / or the community. 	25%
9	Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Is within the allocated budget amount. ○ Budget is reasonable and realistic. ○ Quotes to support the activities / detailed budget aligned with the project activities. ○ Value for money. 	25%

Note: ACHPs identified but not recommended for funding will be captured by AHO for consideration in future funding programs.

5 SUBMISSION OF GRANT APPLICATIONS

5.1 Lodgement of Application

Applications must be lodged at the address below by the time and date specified in the Grant Application (Closing Time).

All applications (including any supporting documents) must be lodged via SmartyGrants.

The application must be completed and submitted prior to the Closing Time.

By lodging its application electronically, the Applicant is providing an electronic signature in accordance with the Electronic Transactions Act 2000 (NSW).

If an application consists of multiple uploads, due to the number of files or file size, it is the responsibility of Applicant to ensure that transmission of all files is completed before the Closing Time.

If applicants are having difficulty with completing and submitting their submissions, please contact SectorDevelopment@aho.nsw.gov.au for assistance.

5.2 Applicants to inform themselves

Applicants shall be deemed to have:

- examined the invitation documents and any other information made available in writing by the NSW Government to applicants for the purpose of responding to the invitation;
- examined all information relevant to the risks, contingencies, and other circumstances having an effect on their application and which is obtainable by the making of reasonable enquiries; and
- satisfied themselves as to the correctness and sufficiency of their applications and that their responses cover the Grant Applications conditions and all matters and things necessary for the due and proper performance and completion of the work described in the invitation documents.

Should an applicant find any discrepancy, error or omission in the Grant Application the applicant shall notify the Contact Officer in writing on or before the closing date and closing time.

6 AFTER GRANT APPLICATIONS CLOSE

6.1 Assessment of Applications

The Evaluation Committee will evaluate each application in accordance with the assessment criteria set out in Section 4 of this Grant Application.

The assessment will be based on information provided with the application.

The Evaluation Committee may request some or all applicants to provide additional information to clarify aspects of their applications, either in writing or during post-tender interviews. If a written response is requested, it must be provided within 48 hours after the request is received.

All information submitted in the application or obtained subsequently by the Evaluation Committee will be treated as confidential.

6.2 Eligibility Criteria

Any application that does not demonstrate that the applicant meets the eligibility criteria listed in Section 4 will be eliminated from consideration.

6.3 Outcome of the Grant Application process

The decision to register an applicant, with or without conditions, is at the sole discretion of the AHO. The AHO will not be liable for any costs or damages incurred by applicants through exercising this discretion.

Applicants may be registered even if their applications do not conform strictly to all requirements of the Grant Application. Note that registration does not constitute entering into a Funding Deed for the proposed work.

Applicants will be advised in writing whether they are to be registered or were unsuccessful.

6.4 Acquittal of Funds and Reporting to AHO

Grants up to \$100,000:

- Sixty percent (60%) of the Funding will be paid upon the signing of this agreement.
- Twenty percent (20%) of the Funding will be paid based on achievements of milestones.
- The remaining twenty percent (20%) of the Funding will be paid based on achievements of milestones. Timing of the payments will be aligned with the satisfactory receipt and review of Progress Reports and one (1) final report.

6.5 Disclosure of Information

Details of this Grant Application and the outcome of the tender process will be disclosed in accordance with the Government Information (Public Access) Act (NSW) and the Premier's Memorandum 2007-01.

6.6 Changes in Circumstances

Applicants must advise the Contact Person immediately in writing of any material change to the information contained in the Grant application, including any substantial change in their ownership or their financial or technical capacity. Copies of relevant documents must be submitted with the advice. For successful applicants, this requirement applies until a contract is awarded as a result of any subsequent tendering process.

It is expected that key personnel nominated in the application will be utilised, in the capacity indicated, during any early tender involvement process and the resulting contract. If any such key personnel become unavailable, the applicant must advise the Contact Person and provide relevant details of a replacement.

6.7 Publicity

Registered applicants must not advertise or publish their registration in any form without the prior written consent of the AHO.

6.8 Protection of Privacy

The applicant warrants that information provided in the application is accurate, up to date and complete, and that nominated individuals authorise its collection and are aware:

- that the information is being collected for the purpose of evaluating applications and may be made available to the AHO and its agents for that purpose;
- of any consequences for the individual if the information (or any part of it) is not provided;
- if the supply of information by the individual is required by law or is voluntary; and
- of the existence of any right to access or correct the information.

6.9 Exchange of Information between Government Agencies

By submitting an application, the applicant authorises the AHO to gather, monitor, assess, and communicate to other NSW Government agencies or local government authorities' information about the applicant's financial position and its performance in respect of any Funding Deed that may be ultimately awarded.

7 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Sector Capability grants are designed to support ACHPs with improving their business growth, sustainability, compliance and supporting tenants by providing culturally appropriate and responsive housing to Aboriginal people across NSW.

Grant funding can support any business development and capability building needs that may align to the seven (7) NRSCH / NSWLS Performance outcomes (**Table A**) for business growth and self-sustainability.

The Grant can also be utilised to assist with issues relating to ACHP performance and compliance in accordance with the AHO Provider Performance Framework (PPF) e.g. if the applicant is on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) and needs to outsource support to address this need.

The grants can also be referred to the Sector Top 10 Priorities (**Table B**), which have synergies within the example guide in Table A.

Table A: NRSCH / NSWLS Performance Outcomes

NRSCH / NSWLS Performance Outcomes	Example Guide
Performance Outcome 1: Tenancy Management	Consultant support to develop and Tenancy/residency management policies and procedures, Hardware, Software (tenancy manage systems), Tenant information days/event, Operational resource e.g. Work Vehicle, Employment.
Performance Outcome 2: Housing Assets	Support to Develop Repairs and maintenance policies and procedures including the AHO AMF, Costed asset management /maintenance plan (AMP), AHO AMF Property/ housing development plan/ target (New Housing Supply, if applicable, Support to development Property condition standards, Repairs and maintenance information, Tenants' maintenance survey/feedback, asset reporting, Backlog R&M Support process
Performance Outcome 3: Community Engagement	Development of Community engagement goals, plans, strategies, policies, procedures, Community housing promotional material, Support Community Partnership arrangements, agreements, Website, Tenant Engagement, Cultural Activities, Stakeholder Partnerships within community, Community event ,NAIDOC, tenants' information days E.g. Home Ownership or other
Performance Outcome 4: Governance	Development of policies and procedures e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution/rules (consistent with the National Law wind-up clause for assets' transfer) • Governance structure • Governance code, charter or equivalent • Governance policies and procedures • Strategic and operational/business plans • Business continuity plan • Risk management framework/ • Legal, policy and standards compliance policies, procedures, and monitoring

NRSCH / NSWLS Performance Outcomes	Example Guide
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for Legal Advice, Professional Development, HR and procedures
Performance Outcome 5: Probity	Development of policies and procedures e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fraud prevention • Criminal conduct prevention plan • Procurement • Employment checks • Code of conduct for directors • Probity policies: whistle-blowers' protection policy, conflict of interest policy, gifts and hospitality policy, procurement policy • Conflicts of interest register/records • Gifts
Performance Outcome 6: Management	Development of Strategic/development/growth plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation chart • Corporate structure and systems • Operational policies and procedures • Quality management / improvement system
Performance Outcome 7: Financial Viability	Development of policies and procedures e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial governance and management policies and procedures • Financial planning (annual budget and forecast) • Related financial development/growth projection plan • Financial planning and scenario testing • Debt financing arrangements, if applicable • Audit management • Financial performance reporting, Financial viability data and measures, funding applications including HAFF, SHAF

Table B – Sector Top 10 Priorities



- 1** **Defined housing supply targets** – for both new and transferred supply
- 2** **Sector consolidation** and registration requirements
- 3** **Sustainable** future subsidy arrangements
- 4** **Title and property management** transfers
- 5** **Backlog R&M** – backlog and supporting processes for ongoing effective management
- 6** **Strategy for former missions and reserves** and discrete communities
- 7** **Rent policy and collection processes** to support provider viability
- 8** **Workforce development** and employment opportunities
- 9** **Co-ordinated Regional Development** and Investment
- 10** **Increased Home Ownership** Opportunities

8 ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – AHO Draft Funding Deed (Short Form) – Sector Capability Grant Program - DRAFT
- Attachment 2 – Provider Performance Framework
- Attachment 3 – FAQ Sheet
- Attachment 4 – Webinar Presentation March 2025