

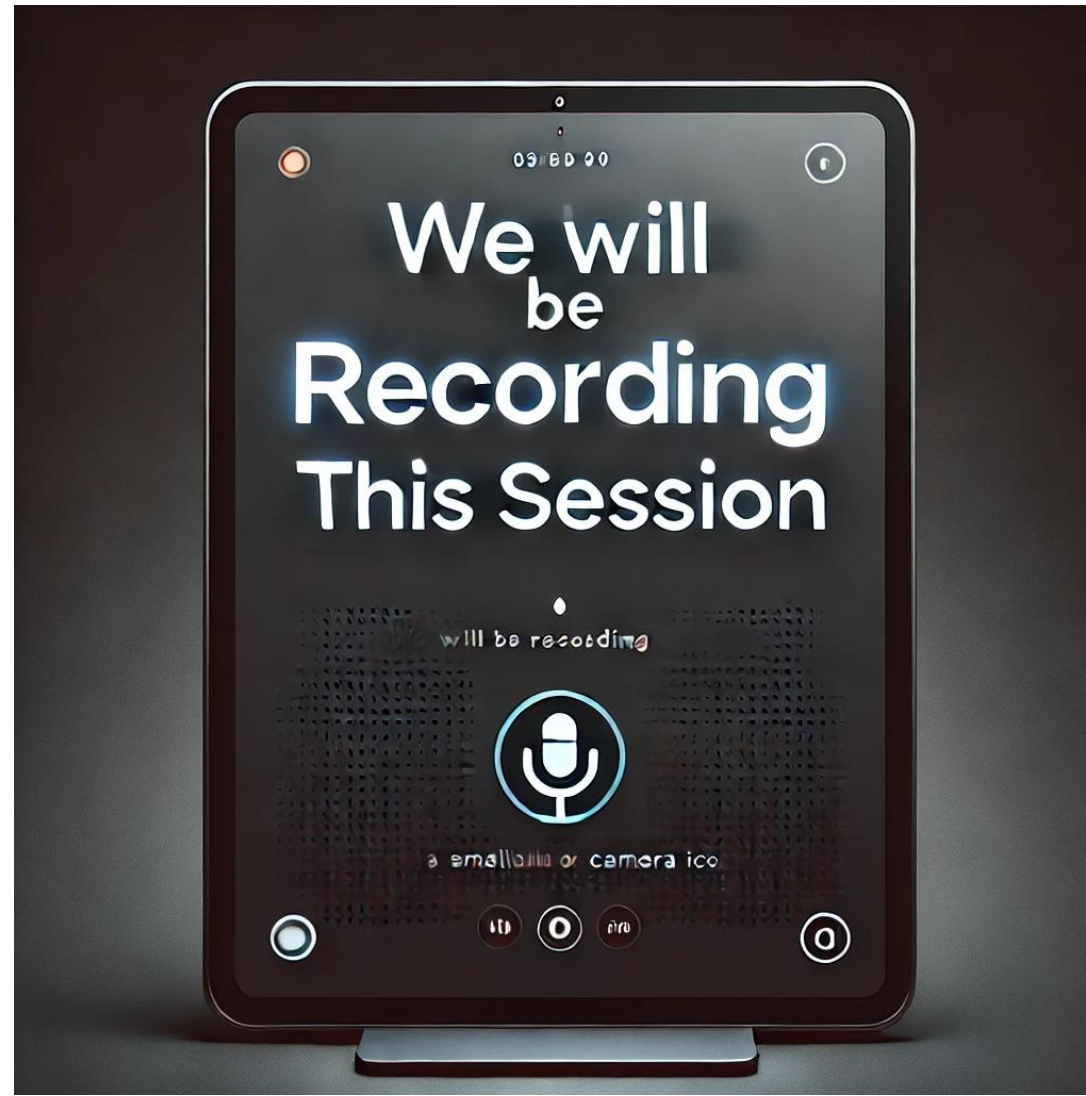
Winning the Grant

Mastering Event and Grant Applications

Richard Everson
General Manager
Destination Southern NSW
Thursday, 27 February 2025



Let's Get Started



Acknowledgement of Country

Destination Southern NSW acknowledges the many Aboriginal Nations and Aboriginal People of the Southern NSW region as the traditional carers and custodians of the land that we all now live and work on.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.



The Role of Destination Southern NSW

Board

- 5 Directors

Team

- General Manager
- Industry Development Managers
 - South Coast & Snowies
 - Southern Tablelands
- Comms Manager

Strategic Priorities

Southern NSW Destination
Management Plan

Coordination & Advocacy

Share information and opportunities
Advocate on behalf of industry

Capacity Building

Sector-wide projects – cruise, MTB,
trails, signage

Capability Building

One-on-one and group engagement
with operators



Southern New South Wales
Destination Management Plan

2022-2030



The Role of Destination Southern NSW

Myth Busting

“Destination Southern NSW is a part of Destination NSW”

We work closely with Destination NSW, but we are an independent organisation

“Why don’t you promote the region?”

We are funded to work with the tourism sector (B2B), we don’t promote the region (B2C). That’s the role of the LGA, LTO, and Destination NSW



Destination
NSW



Destination
Southern NSW

Your Presenter Richard Everson

Applicant

- ATDP Country Guesthouse Schonegg
- ATDP Poachers Way
- Entrepreneurs Program Business Growth Grants

Destination Southern NSW Project Manager

- Southern Tablelands Trails Project
- Southern Tablelands Signage Strategy
- Regional NSW Cruise Industry
- South Coast Centre of Excellence (with DSSS)

Advocate

- Letters of Support for Applicants
- Review draft applications
- Assessment/feedback



Outline of Content

Why do grants exist

When to apply

When to begin an application

What the ideal applicant looks like

How to answer the question

Types of question

Letters of support

Resources

Q & A



Objectives

1. Understand key concepts
2. Answer your questions via Q & A
Use the Q & A function, give a 👍 to questions you like
3. Approach your next application with a fresh perspective

Copy of slides will be available

Recording of presentation will be available



Why Do Grants Exist?

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See the grant from the grant funder's point of view

They have a mission, and strategic objectives they are trying to achieve



Why Do Grants Exist?

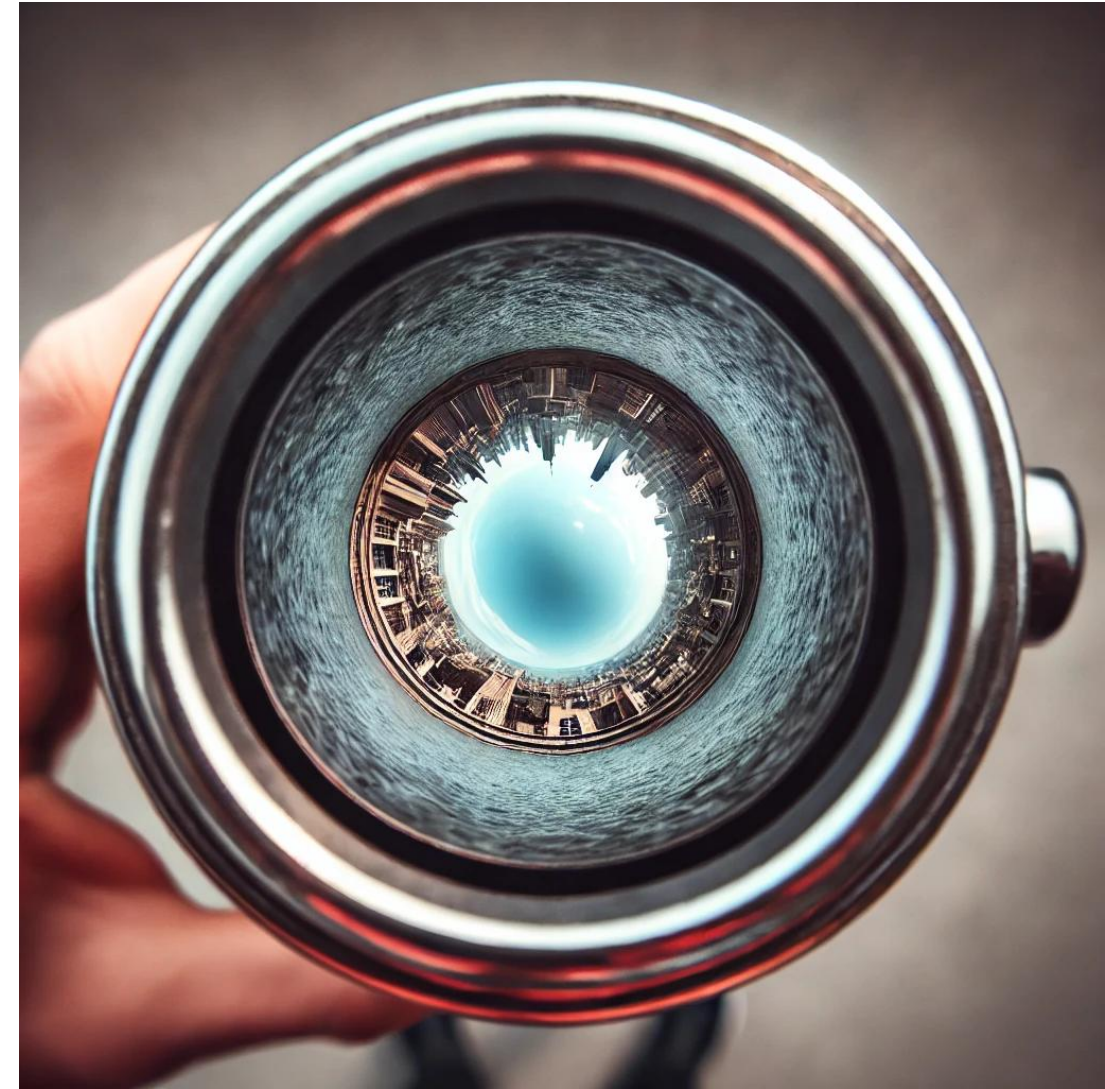
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The grant funding organisation isn't interested in how important your event or project is to you, just how well it meets the program objectives

It's a question of perspective



Why Do Grants Exist?

Destination NSW

Regional Event Fund

The ***primary objective*** of the Regional Event Fund is to provide grants to events in regional NSW that have demonstrated they are, or have the potential to become, tourism drivers for their region.

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Image credit David Rogers Photography

Why Do Grants Exist?

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Destination NSW Regional Event Fund

Secondary objectives include:

- leveraging supported events through Destination NSW marketing and communications activities to build the profile of NSW and,
- through the application and feedback process, to offer guidance to event organisers



Image credit David Rogers Photography

Why Do Grants Exist?

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Destination NSW Regional Event Fund

Ultimately, the funding program aims to increase visitation to regional events and increase economic benefit to destinations.



Image credit David Rogers Photography

Why Do Grants Exist?

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Regional Economic Development and Community Investment Program

The Regional Economic Development and Community Investment Program (program) is open to initiatives that promote regional economic development and support employment creation and retention.



Image credit Flow MTB Gravity Eden

Why Do Grants Exist?

Winning the Grant



Regional Economic Development and Community Investment Program

Partnerships

Projects that incorporate a collaborative or partnership approach ***are encouraged.***

BONUS POINTS!



Image credit Flow MTB Gravity Eden

Why Do Grants Exist?



To help an organisation fulfil
its operational objectives

Recipients of the Regional Event Fund Flagship Event stream 2024/25	
Event name	Organisation name
A Little Bit of Broke	Broke Fordwich Wine & Tourism Association Incorporated
Australian Alpine Ascent (Triple AAA)	Elite Energy Pty Ltd
Australian Surf Championships - Shortboard, Bodyboard & Para	Surfline Australia
Bathurst Heritage Trades Trail	onal Council
Casino Truck Show	y Council
Cementa Festival	Incorporated
EAT Festival	ouncil
Fe-	ation Limited
Beatlesfest	al Incorporated
Brews & Blues	pty Ltd
Buangla Music & Arts Festival	Club Tenterfield Inc
Bundanoon Folk Festival	Co-operative Ltd
Clearly Presents 'Land of Milk & Honey'	
Cobar Grey Mardi Gra	
Dark Sky Festival - Lord Howe Island	
Dine in the Bines	
Heartbeat of the Hunter	
Illuminate 2025	
International Women's Day Event Series	
Let's Surf Lake Mac Pro Junior	
MAKE GOOD Festival	
National Freestyle Mountain Bike Championships	
Naturellement	
OpenField Arts Festival	
Orange Rainbow Festival	

Recipients of the Regional Event Fund Incubator Event stream 2024/25	
Event name	Organisation name
Living Eyes Pty Ltd	
Badlands Brewery Pty Ltd	
ORDINARY GROUP PTY LTD	
Bundanoon Folk Festival Association Inc.	
KIAMA MUSIC & ARTS PTY LTD	
Cobar Shire Council	
Danielle Nicolson T/A Love Lord Howe	
Ryefield Enterprises Pty Ltd	
Total Field Days Association	
Port Stephens Council	
R Saunders Pty Ltd	
Vintcorp Pty Limited	
Bundanon Trust	
Greenvalleys Mountain Bike Club	
we are neighbourgood	
OpenField Arts Festival Inc.	
Orange City Council	
Wild Places Foundation Limited	

When to Apply

When your Project and the Grant Align

You have 0% chance of success if your project does not match the program guidelines > 95 %

There are no exceptions for mandatory criteria.



When to Apply

When An Opportunity Arises

If you are working on a project, an ‘opportunistic grant’ can help you along the way

In this situation, consider the grant a ‘bonus’



When to Apply

When the ROI calculation Adds Up

- Time / Opportunity cost



When to Apply

When the ROI calculation Adds Up

- Time / Opportunity cost
- Cost – wages, consultants



When to Apply

When the ROI calculation Adds Up

- Time / Opportunity cost
- Cost – wages, consultants
- Social capital – impact on:
staff,
relationships,
reputation



When to Apply

When the Odds are in Your Favour

It's true that many recent grant rounds have been heavily over-subscribed.

It's also true some grants struggle to secure sufficient applications, including some smaller, lesser-known programs (hint, this may be why deadlines are extended).



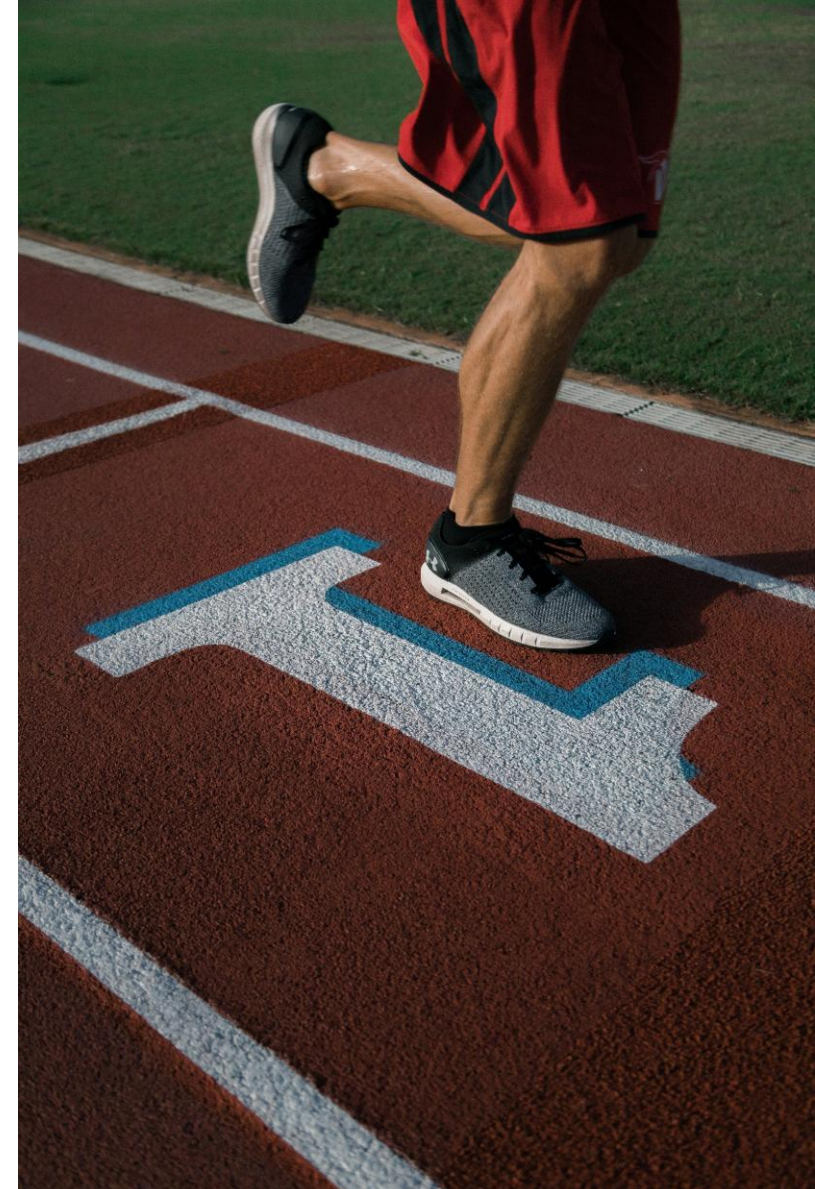
When to Apply

Apply to Improve your Grant Writing Skills

Treat the process like training for the Olympics.

You won't win if you don't enter.

You will probably need some experience before you have the skills to win.



When to Apply

Apply to Become a 'Serial Winner'

Once you win, you could join the ranks of 'serial winners'

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When to Apply

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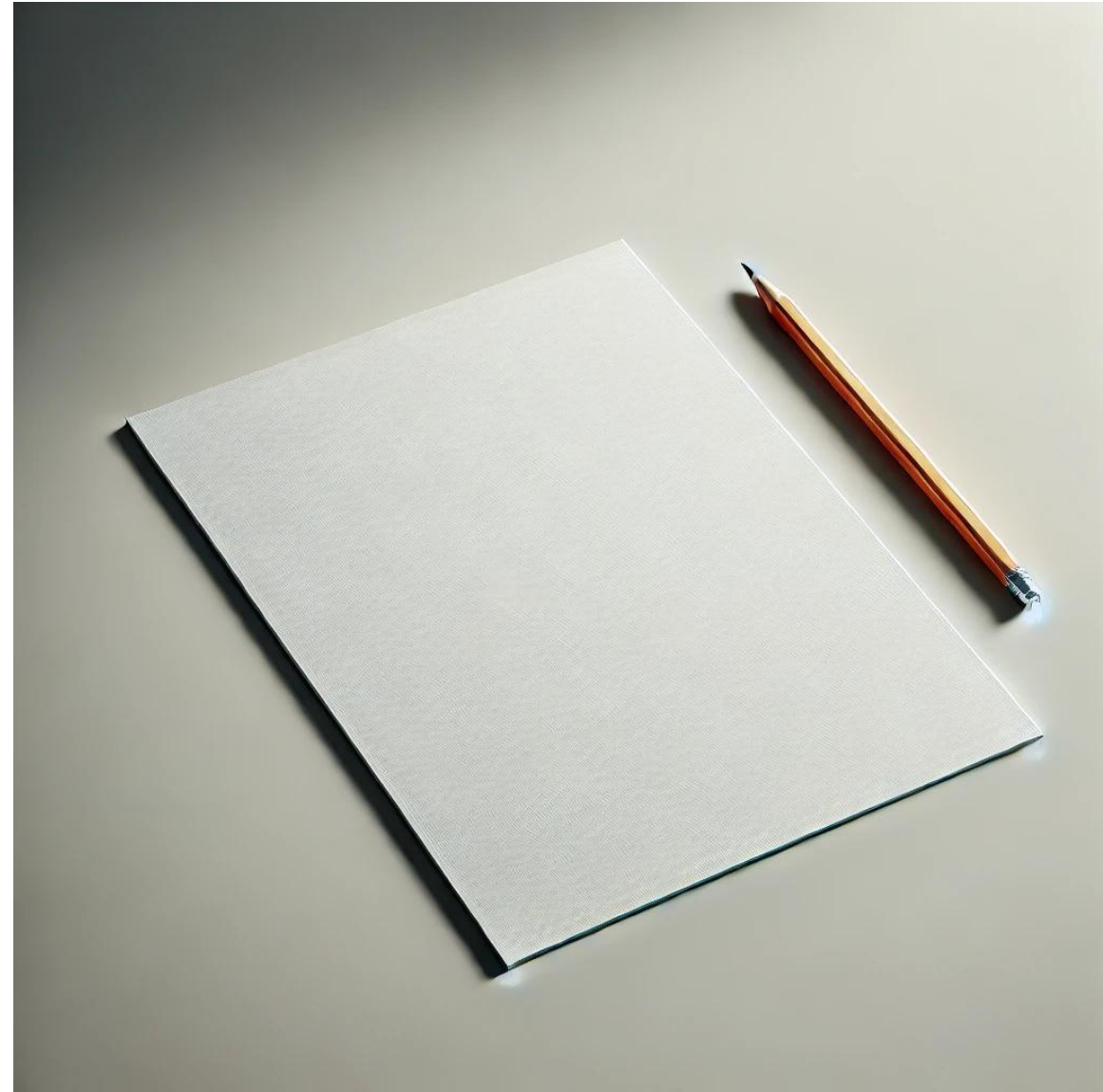
1. When you have > 95% alignment
2. When a grant aligns with an existing project
3. When you're ready to get 'match fit'

Image credit Annie Spratt, Upsplash



When to Begin an Application

You won't succeed if you start with a blank sheet of paper on Day 1



When to Begin an Application

Shovel Ready Projects

Successful applicants have shovel ready projects in their top drawer.

e.g. Business Case & Strategy Development Grants



When to Begin an Application

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Start Today

Remember the Olympics analogy –
start training today



What the Ideal Applicant Looks Like

Making the First Cut

Picture the stereotypical grey haired, grey suited, bureaucrat, sitting in their office with a huge checklist and a sharp pencil.

To be considered, you need them to tick every box.

With a pile of 80 applications, they are looking for the first chance to put your application in the 'non-compliant' pile and move on.



What the Ideal Applicant Looks Like

Making the First Cut

The 'grey haired bureaucrat' metaphor is grossly unfair. I have assessed plenty of applications, most assessors want you to succeed, but there are some go / no go gates that must be complied with.

It's a complete waste of time and effort to continue if you can't, or don't, meet a compliance threshold or answer a question properly. E.g. How many FTE? Have you contacted your DN? Know that any claims will be checked



What the Ideal Applicant Looks Like

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Show them You Get It

The funding agency wants to be confident that:

- You understand what they're after,
- Your project aligns with their program objectives, and
- You have the capacity to deliver your project

Your success is their success.



What the Ideal Applicant Looks Like

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A safe pair of hands



How to Answer the Question

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Engage with the Funder

Read the guidelines and all associated materials

Ask questions early

Attend info sessions

Establish a relationship



How to Answer the Question

Answer from Their Perspective

Take time to understand the point of the question. Why are they asking it? What do **they** want to know? (Imagine you're answering a lecturer's exam question).

Avoid telling them what **you** want them to know.



How to Answer the Question

How will your event attract overnight visitation, from outside the event's Local Government Area, and demonstrate that sufficient accommodation capacity exists?

Regional Economic Development and Community Investment Program
REDCIP Application Form
Application No. REDCIP-0380 From Richard Everson - DRAFT

Regional Economic Development and Community Investment Program
Application No. REDCIP-0380 From Richard Everson - DRAFT

Please confirm your organisation's entity type.
Company Limited by Guarantee
If known, please describe the legal status of your organisation i.e. Company Limited by Guarantee;
Company Limited by Shares; Incorporated Non-government; Registered Association under an Act of
Parliament; Registered Co-operative under an Act of Parliament.

Please enter your organisation's ACN, AIN, Association Number, or other identifying information here.
617 944 662

Aboriginal owned business
An Aboriginal owned business under this program is defined as having a minimum of 50% Aboriginal ownership that can be demonstrated through recognition from an appropriate organisation, such as:
• NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce
• Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC)
• Supply Nation
Aboriginal owned businesses can also choose to provide a statutory declaration to demonstrate a minimum of 50% Aboriginal ownership. A statutory declaration template is available [here](#). Please note this must be signed by a Justice of the Peace, legal practitioner or notary public.

Is your organisation an Aboriginal owned business? *
☐ Yes ☒ No

Co-contribution determination
Under the program a co-contribution is required:
• for profit entities - a minimum of 50% of the requested funding
• all other applicants - a minimum of 20% of the requested funding.

organisation? *

How to Answer the Question

How will your event attract overnight visitation, from outside the event's Local Government Area, and demonstrate that sufficient accommodation capacity exists?

Your answer should be focussed on economic impact.

Overnight visitation is worth more than day visitation.

Visitation from outside the LGA is preferred, because this revenue is considered 'export income'.

You will need sufficient accommodation to achieve the economic impact anticipated.



Question relates to key objective of the REF

1. Economic Impact (30%)

Destination NSW targets its investment in events that will deliver new expenditure into a region through visitation.

How to Answer the Question

How will your event **attract overnight visitation**, from outside the event's Local Government Area, and **demonstrate** that sufficient **accommodation capacity** exists?

Use sub-headings

Repeat the question in the answer.

Attracting overnight visitation

**Demonstrating
Accommodation Capacity**

How to Answer the Question



How will your event attract overnight visitation, from outside the event's Local Government Area, and demonstrate that sufficient accommodation capacity exists?

Identify the key elements of your response

Attracting overnight visitation

Event programming: Highlight any multi-day activities, evening events, or early morning starts that encourage attendees to stay overnight rather than making a day trip.

Target audience: Identify the specific regions or demographics you're targeting — e.g., neighbouring LGAs, major cities like Sydney, or even interstate visitors.

Marketing strategy: Mention how you'll use targeted marketing campaigns (social media, partnerships with travel agents, tourism websites) to attract people from outside the LGA.

Demonstrating Accommodation Capacity

Accommodation audit: Reference the number of rooms available in local hotels, motels, B&Bs, or even campgrounds.

How to Answer the Question

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How will your event attract overnight visitation, from outside the event's Local Government Area, and demonstrate that sufficient accommodation capacity exists?

Include evidence / data

Attracting overnight visitation

Event programming: Highlight any multi-day activities, evening events, or early morning starts that encourage attendees to stay overnight rather than making a day trip.

Target audience: Identify the specific regions or demographics you're targeting — e.g., neighbouring LGAs, major cities like Sydney, or even interstate visitors.

Marketing strategy: Mention how you'll use targeted marketing campaigns (social media, partnerships with travel agents, tourism websites) to attract people from outside the LGA.

Demonstrating Accommodation Capacity

Accommodation audit: Reference the number of rooms available in local hotels, motels, B&Bs, or even campgrounds.

Historical data: If this is a recurring event, you can use past visitor numbers and accommodation data as evidence of capacity and demand.

How to Answer the Question

Winning the Grant



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How will your event attract overnight visitation, from outside the event's Local Government Area, and demonstrate that sufficient accommodation capacity exists?

Add some secret sauce

Attracting overnight visitation

Event programming: Highlight any multi-day activities, evening events, or early morning starts that encourage attendees to stay overnight rather than making a day trip.

Target audience: Identify the specific regions or demographics you're targeting — e.g., neighbouring LGAs, major cities like Sydney, or even interstate visitors.

Marketing strategy: Mention how you'll use targeted marketing campaigns (social media, partnerships with travel agents, tourism websites) to attract people from outside the LGA.

Demonstrating Accommodation Capacity

Accommodation audit: Reference data or insights about the number of rooms available in local hotels, motels, B&Bs, or even campgrounds.

Historical data: If this is a recurring event, you can use past visitor numbers and accommodation data as evidence of capacity and demand

Partnerships: Mention any collaborations with accommodation providers — for example, negotiated package deals or reserved room blocks.



How to Answer the Question

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How will your event attract overnight visitation, from outside the event's Local Government Area, and demonstrate that sufficient accommodation capacity exists?

Attracting overnight visitation

Event programming: Our event begins on Friday and concludes on Sunday. Our 3-day VIP Pass encourages visitors to experience all 3 days, our headline acts will be performing on Sunday evening to encourage an extra night's stay.

Target audience: Our line-up features rising stars who are attracting national recognition within the folk music community. We aim to connect with folk music clubs and societies on the east coast of Australia who recognise and are keen to support new talent.

Marketing strategy: Our rising stars have strong social media followings. We will use paid and earned media to engage with fan groups. We will offer promo code discounts and direct from platform sales to encourage early ticket sales.

Demonstrating Accommodation Capacity

Accommodation audit: There are 600 hotel and short-term accommodation beds available, plus 60 caravan and 60 camping sites within 50 km of the event venue.

Partnerships: We have blocked 80 rooms with local motel operators which will be bundled with our VIP Pass ticket sales.

Types of Question

Confirmation that the applicant and project meet the guidelines

Read the guidelines carefully

Contact the agency ASAP if you have any questions.

Upload appropriate evidence

Name files appropriately

Remember the 'bonus points'

e.g. Partnerships, Aboriginal owned business



Types of Question

Demonstration of capability

Provide proof that your organisation can deliver the project

- Capability statement
- Specified personnel CVs
- Business plan
- Financial statements



Types of Question

Project feasibility

As for 'Capability' above, provide evidence that your project will succeed.

Demonstrate that you have a solid project plan.

Get quotes. Be prepared to engage experts. Don't cut corners.

Respond like a project management professional.



Types of Question



Financials

Provide sufficient detail to demonstrate project feasibility

But don't tie yourself in knots by being too prescriptive...

Be aware that there may be limits to budget line variations e.g. no more than 10 % variance, give yourself some wriggle room.

Get quotes where possible, ensure your suppliers are aware what they are quoting for (i.e. not a firm commitment to purchase)



Types of Question

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Financials

Consider all the costs associated with the project, ensure you will have sufficient funds to deliver and sustain the project

Very often, funds can't be used for ongoing operational costs.

Demonstrate that you have considered how to meet these costs.

There are many, many projects that are currently struggling to meet operational overheads.



Types of Question



Financials

Be aware of limits / constraints.

E.g. No more than 20% of total grant fees can be used for project administration, no more than 25% project contingencies.

Be very aware of permissible and prohibited expenditure

E.g. Sometimes funds **can** be used for admin, often funds cannot be used to purchase assets like laptops, or for insurance costs

Make sure your income and expenditure lines add up!

Some applications require a 'zero balance'



Types of Question

Co-Contributions

Be aware of how co-contributions are calculated. Sometimes in-kind contributions may be considered. Sometimes the co-contribution amount varies based on the type of entity applying.

You won't need to commit your co-contribution funds unless you are successful.

If you are successful, you will need to ensure you have access to the funds.

- Funds in the bank
- Confirmation of a line of credit (can be contingent on a successful application)

You will need to provide evidence that the funds are available, e.g. a letter from your organisation's Chair, bank statement etc.



Types of Question

Risk management

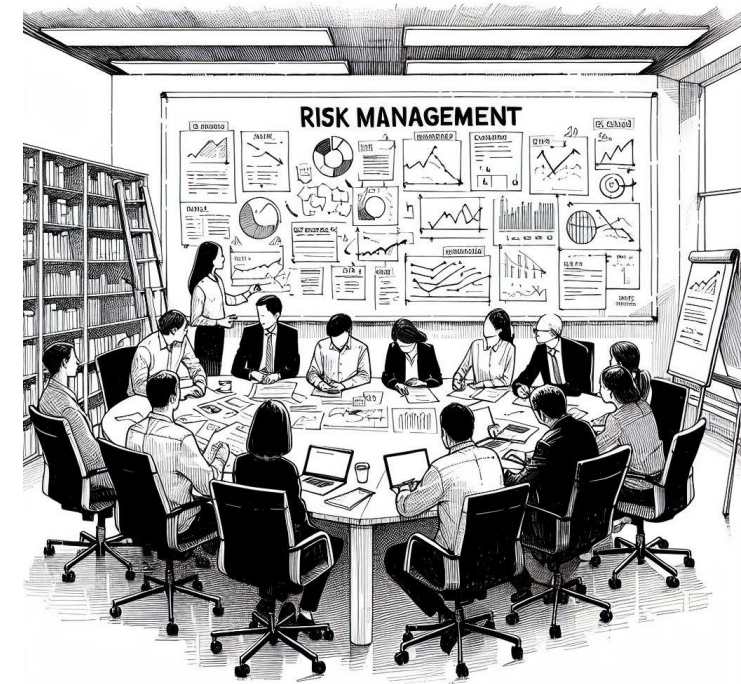
You don't need to be an expert, but you do need to demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles. Likelihood v impact = risk rating

Consider the top risks across the most common risk areas:

- Financial
- Reputational
- Operational
- Strategic
- Compliance & Legal
- Environmental & Sustainability

Identify the risk and an appropriate mitigation strategy

Remember, this is about demonstrating you're a safe pair of hands.



Types of Question

Marketing

As above, demonstrate you have a solid grasp of the basics, use appropriate language and respected methodologies.

- Identify target markets
- Develop compelling messages
- Identify comms channels appropriate to the target market, e.g. a young target market will use social media. An older target market may respond to an ad in a specialist travel magazine.

Identify marketing strategies that include an opportunity for evaluation and metrics (use promo codes, online platforms, collect data during the booking process)



Types of Question

Data collection/acquittal

This is an area that is of vital interest to the funding agency but often ignored or forgotten by the applicant.

Data Collection

The agency has an obligation to demonstrate it has used its funds to achieve its objectives. It needs your data to do this. Demonstrate that you understand why this information is important and show how you plan to capture relevant data.

Acquittal

You have an obligation to demonstrate you have used your funds appropriately, and done what you said you would do. You need evidence to support your acquittal, ensure data is captured and analysed.



Letters of Support

Why?

Demonstrate that your project

- has broad support and will be welcomed if successful
- aligns with regional economic and community priorities
- is deemed feasible by external agencies



Letters of Support

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Who to Ask?

- Those with sectoral alignment – e.g. tourism sector, regional economic development agencies, arts and culture organisations
- Government - local, state, federal
- Those with geographic alignment – local chambers of commerce, clubs and associations, stakeholder groups, RDA SNA, DPIRD

Quality beats quantity

Quality and quantity is best



Letters of Support

Winning the Grant



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How to Ask

Check with each agency, some have a specific process (e.g. our Letter of Support Request)

Best - provide an outline, let the agency draft their own letter, e.g.

- Para 1 - who you are,
- Para 2 - the project,
- Para 3 - alignment,
- Para 4 - endorsement

Easiest - provide a template, ask them to fill in the gaps, rephrase in their own words

Allow plenty of time, confirm receipt of your request, follow up



Resources

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Use AI

Ask for draft reviews

Pay for support





Q & A

Use the Q & A function

Give a 👍 to questions you like



Contact

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Thank you, good luck

Industry Development Managers

Jenny Robb – South Coast & Snowies jenny.robbs@dsnsw.com.au

Kylie Bushby – Southern Tablelands kylie.bushby@dsnsw.com.au

Jessica Bryden – Southern Tablelands jessica.bryden@dsnsw.com.au

from 24 March 2025

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