

# ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS EARLY INTERVENTION INNOVATION FUND

**Round 2**

NGO EVALUATION GRANT SCHEME  
GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS



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# Call for Applications – Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) NGO Evaluation Grant Scheme

NSW Health invites applications for Round 2 of the NGO Evaluation Grants Scheme by NGOs in the AOD sector to evaluate existing programs to build the evidence base.

Further information on the NGO Evaluation Grants Scheme is available at <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/aod/Pages/default.aspx>

For queries regarding the scheme, email [aodgrants@moh.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:aodgrants@moh.health.nsw.gov.au).

## Application and selection process

The process will include one stage:

1. Expressions of Interest

## Submission of applications

All applications must be completed using the forms available at <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/aod/Pages/default.aspx>.

Expressions of Interest must be emailed to [aodgrants@moh.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:aodgrants@moh.health.nsw.gov.au).

Expressions of Interest and attachments must be received by COB Friday 27 October 2017.

## Key dates

STAGE	ACTIVITY	DATE
Stage 1	Expressions of interest open	August 2017
	Information sessions	September 2017
	Expressions of interest close	COB 27 October 2017
	AOD Review Panel assessment period	November 2017 - December 2017
	All applicants notified of outcome	February 2018
	Funding Agreement executed	March 2018

Round 2 of the AOD Innovation Grant Scheme is open simultaneously for application. This fund invites NGOs or NSW Local Health Districts (LHDs), Ambulance Service of NSW, Specialty Health Networks (SHNs) and NSW Health Pathology, with an NGO Partner, to apply for funding to specifically drive AOD innovation with a particular focus on young people who are vulnerable to using drugs or are already participating in risky drug use. Further details about the AOD Innovation Grant Scheme are available at <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/aod/Pages/default.aspx>.

# Guidelines for Applicants

In 2016/2017 the NSW Government increased funding by \$75 million over four years to tackle drug misuse in our communities. This package of investment focuses on supporting more young people, more people into treatment and more families.

The Early Intervention Innovation Fund is part of the NSW Drug Package and is \$8 million over four years. It aims to help build the evidence base for early intervention models to support people at risk, with a particular focus on young people who are vulnerable to using drugs or are already participating in risky drug use.

The Fund comprises two Grants Schemes:

1. Non-Government Organisation (NGO) Evaluation Grant Scheme (this guideline) – for NGOs in the AOD sector to evaluate existing programs to build the evidence base.
2. Innovation Grant Scheme – for NGOs and partners to specifically drive AOD innovation, with a particular focus on young people who are vulnerable to using drugs or are already participating in risky drug use.

## Purpose and Objectives

The overarching purpose of the NGO Evaluation Grant Scheme is to build the evidence base for existing programs delivered by NGOs for which there is a strong rationale for their success. The NGO Evaluation Grant Scheme intends to:

1. Foster the generation of high quality evaluations which are directly relevant to clinical, health service and population health practice in NSW.
2. Enhance the research capacity within the AOD NGO sector.

## Details of funding

These grants are for \$30,000 to \$150,000 over two years.

The funding may be used for costs associated with the research project including a small amount of research administration costs for NGOs only but cannot be directed towards non-NGO research administration costs, capital works, general maintenance costs, general telephone/communications systems (unless integral to the innovation), basic office equipment such as desks and chairs, rent and the cost of utilities.

## Partners

NGOs will need to identify and engage relevant partners who are essential for the effective delivery of the project and implementation of the outcomes in NSW. Applicants are encouraged to partner with other organisations to assist with generalisability of the findings. Applicants will be required to explain if this approach is not considered appropriate for the project.

These partners may include consumers, internal cross-disciplinary partners or external organisations including other NGOs, the Network of Alcohol and Other Drugs Agencies (NADA), universities, medical research institutes, NSW Health Pillars (Agency for Clinical Innovation, Clinical Excellence Commission, Health Education and Training Institute, Bureau of Health Information), the NSW Ministry of Health, and LHDs/SHNs/Ambulance Service of NSW, Research Hubs, relevant clinical networks, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations and primary health networks. Where the project is likely to impact any of these groups or their policy, an appropriate partner must be included on the project Steering Committee.

## Knowledge translation

The scheme aims to generate high impact research and evaluation that is directly relevant to clinical, health service and population health practice in NSW and to ensure the translation of these findings into policy and practice. The scheme aims to support meaningful co-production of the research and the early identification of activities that will move the findings along the translation continuum, including scaling up the findings across a system or to other settings.

Partner engagement could occur throughout the project, for example:

1. **Prior to and during research** key policy and practice partners could be included in the development of the evaluation and participate in relevant stages of the process including translation activities such as:
  - co-production of the project
  - presentations of findings
  - publication of findings in policy- or practice-relevant formats
  - steps required to change practice or to scale up (if appropriate).
2. **At the completion** of the project applicants and key partners with the host organisation will need to continue to follow through with planned translation activities. Applicants will need to consider how they will measure the success of their knowledge translation activities and the uptake of the findings into practice, noting that one or more Chief Executive/s (or equivalent) will be required to certify that practice change will be implemented in the host organisation and any partner organisation (see Section F in the Expression of Interest form).

Applicants may find the following useful in considering the development of program logic and knowledge translation activities:

Centre for Epidemiology and Evidence. *Developing and Using Program Logic: A Guide. Evidence and Evaluation Guidance Series*, Population and Public Health Division. Sydney: NSW Ministry of Health, 2017.  
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/research/Publications/developing-program-logic.pdf>

Centre for Epidemiology and Evidence. Milat AJ, Newson R, and King L. *Increasing the scale of population health interventions: A guide. Evidence and Evaluation Guidance Series*, Population and Public Health Division. Sydney: NSW Ministry of Health, 2014.  
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/research/Pages/scalability-guide.aspx>

Ruppertsberg AI, Ward V, Ridout A, Foy R. The development and application of audit criteria for assessing knowledge exchange plans in health research grant applications. *Implementation Science* 2014;9:93.

# Eligibility criteria

## Project eligibility criteria for the NGO Evaluation Grants

1. The project must be evaluating an existing program in NSW within an NGO.<sup>1</sup>
2. The project must directly align with the strategic plan of the host organisation, Premier's priorities or state priorities, or it must focus on prevention, early intervention, harm reduction or aftercare/relapse prevention.

Premier's priorities include:

- protecting our kids
- reducing domestic violence
- reducing youth homelessness.

State priorities include:

- keeping people healthy by providing information, education and referrals, enhancing harm reduction, providing support for carers and cross government priorities
- delivering accessible and integrated care by identifying and responding to people with AOD concerns to enable early intervention and access to ongoing treatment, improving access to non-discriminatory specialist treatment, and delivering accessible and coordinated care for people with multiple and complex needs.

The priority population for this scheme is young people who are vulnerable to using drugs or are already participating in risky drug use.

Other populations that will be considered are Aboriginal people, people living in rural and remote NSW, people with mental health issues, pregnant women, individuals at risk of domestic violence, children of parents who have substance use issues, older people, people in contact with the criminal justice system, culturally and linguistically diverse people and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people.

The project team are encouraged to identify specific research questions that are a priority for the host organisation and where there is potential to apply the findings in policy or practice and/or scale up a successful intervention.

3. Applicants must provide a clear governance structure, including Chief Executive (or equivalent) and partner(s) sign off.
4. The applicant must provide confirmation that grant funds will be quarantined for the purposes of the specific evaluation project and provide six monthly reports.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of the Fund, non-government organisation is defined as "community based, not-for-profit organisations which exist independently of State Government Departments and instrumentalities but which may receive financial or other assistance from these for the provision of services required by the Government. Non-government organisations are independent incorporated organisations with their own management structures which are responsible for the operation of those services. The NGO sector is a complex mix of agencies of varying size incorporated under various legislation and with a plethora of objectives, but all serve the community in one form or another".  
([NSW Health 2011. PD2011\\_049 Non-Government Organisation Grant Program-Operational Guidelines](#)).

## Host organisation criteria

1. The host organisation must provide financial and in kind support for the evaluation activities.
2. The host organisation must conduct a review of the applications, ensuring they meet the intent of the grant scheme before submitting.
3. The Chief Executive (or equivalent) of the host organisation must approve the grant application and agree that practice change will be implemented. Partner organisations also affected by practice change will need to co-sign the application.

## Selection criteria

All applications for funding that meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed against the following selection criteria:

1. The extent to which the project will generate new and relevant evidence.
2. The strength of the evaluation design.
3. The ability of the applicant to carry out the proposed project in the timeframe.
4. The extent to which the project aligns with relevant AOD priorities.
5. Engagement with appropriate stakeholders (e.g. researchers, clinicians, consumers, policy makers and the community) including consultation with partners and consumers in the development of the proposal.

### Out of scope

This grant scheme is targeted at supporting evaluation projects. The types of projects listed below have alternative funding sources and so will be out of scope for this grants scheme.

1. Basic science research.
2. Research only occurring in a primary health network.
3. Pharmaceutical-sponsored clinical trials.
4. Projects with a primary focus on cancer. Funding in this area is provided by the Cancer Institute NSW and includes the Translational Program Grants.
5. Projects where the host NGO is not responsible for implementation of the research.

# Supporting resources

## Information sessions

Information sessions will be delivered as webinars in September 2017 to clarify the intent and scope of the schemes. Webinar dates and topics are available on the AOD Early Intervention Innovation Fund website. Register your attendance as soon as possible by emailing [aodgrants@moh.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:aodgrants@moh.health.nsw.gov.au).

## AOD Early Intervention Innovation Fund Website

The website contains further information and resources for applicants including:

- an overview of process guidelines for Expressions of Interest
- details of the range of funded projects from previous rounds
- FAQs about the scheme's processes and requirements.

## Research Support

### 1. Translational Research Framework

The Translational Research Framework has been developed by the Sax Institute to build research capacity. The Framework assists grant applicants to refine research questions and identify feasible research methods to answer these questions.

The framework provides a number of prompts to help identify steps to:

- demonstrate that a health service, program or policy innovation works
- understand the conditions under which it was successful (or unsuccessful)
- where appropriate, identify how to scale up an innovation for greatest impact.

The Framework has been developed for health professionals who may have limited research experience, but may also be useful for more experienced researchers as a structured reminder of the range of issues taken into account in the screening and assessment of full applications.

The Framework is available on the AOD Early Intervention Innovation Fund website accessed via <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/aod/Pages/default.aspx>.

A video about the framework is available at: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/ohmr/Pages/trgs-information-session-videos.aspx>.

### 2. Program Evaluation Guide

The NADA's Program evaluation guide has been developed in partnership with Argyle Research & Training. It contains:

- an overview of evaluation, its benefits, challenges and how to overcome them
- advice on engaging an external evaluation consultant or university researcher
- information on setting up data and support systems for successful evaluation
- a step-by-step guide to planning and conducting an evaluation, and reporting evaluation results.

The guide is available at <http://www.nada.org.au/resources/nadapublications/resourcestoolkits/program-evaluation>.

### 3. Technical research and evaluation support

When an application is awarded, technical research support by an independent researcher will be provided to help organisations to write their evaluation framework and trouble-shoot across the life of the project.

# Application and selection process

## Review panel

Applicants will submit an Expression of Interest that has been reviewed and supported by the Chief Executive (or equivalent) of the host organisation.

Expressions of Interest will first be assessed by the Eligibility Panel, then by the AOD Review Panel against selection criteria. Expressions of Interest must meet all eligibility criteria. The AOD Review Panel may contact applicants in order to clarify or confirm information contained in the Expression of Interest. The Chief Health Officer and Deputy Secretary Population and Public Health, NSW Ministry of Health, will be required to endorse the AOD Review Panel recommendations.

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their EOI. The AOD Review Panel's decision is final.

## Stakeholder engagement

The Ministry of Health will engage with a range of policy and health service stakeholders on specific applications throughout the review process. Advice may be sought at any stage of the assessment process.

## Host organisation review

Prior to submission, EOIs must be reviewed and certified by the host organisation to ensure that applications:

- meet the intent of the scheme
- are aligned with organisational or state priorities
- propose high quality research projects with appropriate methodological design
- are certified by the Chief Executive of the host organisation.

This process allows for host organisations to select the applications they will submit to the scheme.

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## Reporting Requirements

Successful applicants will enter into a Funding Agreement with NSW Health which sets out obligations including that the applicants provide six monthly financial acquittals and forecasts; and progress reports on evaluation activity. Funding for the subsequent year will be made available only when the organisation has provided these reports showing satisfactory progress.

Details of remediation for unsatisfactory progress are outlined in the funding agreement.



