NSW Health

Assessment Plan: Community Connectors for Immunisation Grant

Priority Populations Immunisation Program (PPIP): Increasing vaccination coverage in culturally and linguistically diverse communities

March 2025

Assessment plan	
Date	27 March 2025
Reference number	HA25-822
Program title	Priority Populations Immunisation Program (PPIP): Community Connectors for Immunisation Grant
Prepared by	Health Protection NSW
Branch/Division	Priority Populations Immunisation Program, Immunisation Unit, Communicable Diseases Branch
Enquiries	HSSG-ImmunisationGrants@health.nsw.gov.au

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Introduction

1   Introduction

The Priority Populations Immunisation Program (PPIP) is a strategic initiative with $15 million in funding until 30 June 2028, led by **Health Protection NSW (HPNSW), a department within NSW Health.** The program is designed to improve vaccination rates among groups with low vaccine coverage or significant barriers to immunisation. A key component of this initiative is the Community Connectors for Immunisation Grants program, which will provide funding to not-for-profit organisations that work with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, to foster increased vaccine acceptability and uptake.

As part of the Community Connectors for Immunisation Grants program, HPNSW is conducting an Expression of Interest (EOI) process to award annual grants to eligible not-for-profit organisations. To support a sustainable approach, grants of up to $100,000 per organisation per financial year (up to $550,000 in the total funding pool per financial year) will be available up until 30 June 2028. The grants will be administered by HPNSW in collaboration with Multicultural NSW, Local Health District representatives (LHDs) and Multicultural Health Communication Services, and will be awarded through a targeted, competitive selection process.

Funding will be provided to support not-for-profit organisations to recruit Community Connectors for Immunisation and reimburse them for their time. Community Connectors for Immunisation will be supported in development of necessary skills through a Training of Trainer's program delivered by an expert partner (made available by NSW Health), who will also facilitate a Community of Practice (CoP) forum. This will provide Community Connectors with expert-led training of skills and knowledge required to promote vaccination, address concerns related to immunisation and assist members in their community to get vaccinated.

Grant recipient organisations will be responsible for:

- Recruiting Community Connector(s) for Immunisation.

- Developing and implementing a project to facilitate Community Connector(s) for Immunisation to engage in activities to foster vaccine confidence and uptake in the community, including culturally appropriate education and outreach activities.

- Supporting the Community Connector(s) for Immunisation to develop necessary skills by participating in training and a Community of Practice facilitated by an expert partner (See *Section 5 Successful Grant Applications* of the Expression of Interest Guidelines for more information).

- Providing twice-yearly reports to HPNSW demonstrating activities undertaken and outcomes achieved relevant to the intended objectives of the submitted project plan.

- Maintaining and providing a detailed budget, demonstrating use of grant funding for intended objectives.

- Working with key stakeholders, such as Multicultural Health Services, Public Health Units and/or Primary Health Networks.

The grant opportunity will be published on the NSW Grant and Funding Finder and NSW Health website.

This document sets out the process to be followed, the methodology that will be used to assess applications, and controls to be applied in the assessment. It is the responsibility of each member of the assessment panel to comply with this assessment plan.

This grant opportunity will be managed centrally by HPNSW. Grants will be assessed via a targeted competitive process, as detailed in this assessment plan.

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Governance structure and responsibilities

2 Governance structure and responsibilities

Governance structure

The governance structure for this grant opportunity is as follows:

	Name and/or position	Responsibilities
Secretariat	Public Health Officer Trainee, Priority Populations Immunisation Program, Health Protection NSW, NSW Ministry of Health	Review applications against mandatory eligibility criteria and progress those that meet eligibility to the assessment panel.
Grant assessment panel (i.e. assessors)	**Chair**: Associate Director Priority Populations Immunisation Program, Health Protection NSW, NSW Ministry of Health **Panel members**: - Multicultural NSW representative - NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service representative - South Western Sydney LHD representative - Western Sydney LHD representative - South Eastern Sydney LHD representative - Sydney LHD representative	Individual review of applications by assessment panel members against the assessment criteria to produce an individual score for each criterion. The assessment panel will then come together to review the applications and decide on a consensus score for each criterion, and finalise the order of merit and assessment report. Recommendations will then be presented to the Reviewer for approval before sending to the Decision maker for final determination.
Reviewer	Director, Communicable Diseases, Health Protection NSW, NSW Ministry of Health	Review and endorse the assessment report and progress to the Decision maker for sign-off.
Decision maker	Minister for Health and Regional Health	Consider recommendations from the panel and provide final decision on grant allocation.
Probity Officer	Procure Group Pty Ltd.	Provide probity oversight of all aspects of the expression of interest process.

Governance responsibilities

Secretariat

The secretariat will have the following responsibilities:

- managing the grants general inbox, including all general enquiries or contact requests regarding the grants program

- updating the webpage to include any required clarification to ensure information is available to all potential applicants

- documentation preparation (grant guidelines, assessment plan, meeting minutes, draft evaluation report on behalf of the assessment panel, etc.)

- Initial review of applications against the eligibility criteria and provide a report to the assessment panel to sign-off on each applicant's eligibility

- ensure probity documentation is completed, including conflict of interest forms and confidentiality undertakings

- act in accordance with relevant policies and procedures for the grant program

- communicate the outcome of applications to applicants

- negotiate with the preferred applicant/s any additional terms and conditions relating to a response required in contract/s (as required)

- undertake administrative tasks (such as maintaining registers, making files) as directed by the Chair.

Assessment Panel

Assessment panel members will assess applications against the assessment criteria. Panel members' responsibilities include:

- adherence to best practice probity principles

- update the Chair and the independent probity advisor of any changes to their conflicts of interest or associations status

- review, endorse and comply with this assessment plan

- confirm terms of reference for subject matter expert advisors who provide advice to the assessment panel both out of session and during assessment panel meetings

- to individually assess and score the application responses submitted in accordance with this assessment plan against assessment criteria and within the delegated timeframe

- to identify further clarifications required from applicants

- to reach consensus on the scores against agreed criteria for all responses as per agreed scoring methodology

- to summarise the assessment results and recommend the applicant(s) with whom to proceed to offer

- All panel members will have equal voting rights including the Chair and Deputy Chair.

Chair

The role of the assessment panel Chair is to lead the panel in delivering the assessment of grant applications. They will provide oversight of the assessment process and ensure the assessment panel meet the highest standards of probity to ensure the fair administration of grants and are based on objective and justifiable criteria, meeting standards set out in the Grants Administration Guide.

Subject Matter Expert (SME) Advisors

The SME advisors will provide further specialist and/or technical input/knowledge (e.g. on cultural appropriateness, clinical expertise, financial review or as otherwise deemed appropriate) if requested by the assessment panel or secretariat.

If required, the SME advisors will be asked to review responses to one or more questions within the applications and provide comments. This may be at any step of the assessment or not at all. The SME will not participate in assessing applications against the assessment criteria outside the scope outlined above.

Financial Advisor

The financial advisor will provide specialist and/or technical input in verifying the accuracy of submitted financial reports by each applicant as part of due diligence assessment. A thorough understanding of the applicants financial standing will be required as part of the application

process. The financial advisor will not participate in assessing applications against the assessment criteria outside the scope outlined above.

Reviewer

The role of the Reviewer is to oversee the grant assessment process and the integrity of the activities during the process. The Reviewer will endorse the assessment report and progress this to the Decision Maker for sign-off. These responsibilities include:

- approve the assessment plan, and any amendment made to this document
- provide policy and strategic guidance to the assessment committee
- oversee the assessment process to ensure it is conducted in accordance with the assessment plan and relevant policies and procedures
- review assessment panel recommendations
- seek clarification from the assessment panel if necessary to ensure all issues and risks have been identified and considered during the assessment process
- confirm that value for money is achieved
- consider the assessment panel's recommendations and progress to the Decision Maker for approval
- review the annual progress reports and final reports of the successful grant applicants.

Decision Maker

The role of the Decision Maker is to review the assessment recommendations provided by the Assessment Panel and consider the proposed funding for each organisation. The Decision Maker will provide final approval of successful organisations and the funding allocation.

Independent Probity Advisor

The probity advisor is independent of the assessment process.

A probity advisor will review all documentation associated with the expression of interest process and will attend all assessment panel meetings. The probity advisor will observe the assessment process, identify probity risks and provide guidance on probity risk mitigation. The probity advisor during the assessment process will provide advice on best practice to address the following probity principles:

- fairness and impartiality
- accountability
- transparency
- value for money
- confidentiality
- conflict of interest management.

The details for the Probity Advisor and contact person are as follows:

- Organisation: Procure Group Pty Ltd
- Name: John Pinhorn (Senior Probity Manager)
- Telephone: 0408 488 682
- Email: jpinhorn@procuregroup.com.au

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Confidentiality

3   Confidentiality

A significant quantity of confidential information is generated during the assessment process. The following procedures will be followed to ensure that the unauthorised release of confidential information does not occur:

Confidential documents

The following items are to be maintained as confidential:

- contents of submissions from applicants
- clarification questions and responses
- information produced as part of the assessment process (e.g., assessment plan, scoresheets, meeting minutes and assessment reports)
- other information related to the process that is not publicly available.

Confidential undertaking

A confidentiality undertaking is to be signed by the Chair, the secretariat and the assessment panel members (including advisors) who access confidential information. The secretariat, on behalf of the Chair, maintains a register of persons who have signed the confidentiality undertakings.

Electronic access

All assessment information will be stored on a dedicated computer directory, access to which is locked and only individuals involved in the grant process and system administrators will have access. Documents stored in SharePoint are to have appropriate caveats on access. Documents are not to be printed without an assessment panel Chair's written permission. Each person involved in the grant process is responsible for maintaining security regarding access, distribution, and storage of documents in their respective environments, including individuals working from home.

Secure means of communication will be used for correspondence with external assessment panel members and SME advisors. In addition, any external assessment panel members must establish security arrangements within their premises to ensure that the confidentiality of information is protected, including security over access to IT systems and hard-copy documents.

Printing of information

Confidential information kept electronically must not be printed without the assessment panel Chair's written permission. If permission is granted, the Chair must make a file note describing what was printed, its intended use, and confirm authority was given for the information to be printed. Any physical copies of confidential information must be secured in a locked cabinet when not in use.

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Conflicts of interest

4   Conflicts of interest

All individuals involved in the grant assessment process must identify any perceived, actual or potential conflicts of interest that may arise during the assessment process. This includes assessment panel members, advisors, the secretariat, and the Chair.

There must be no conflicts of interest, which would, or appear to, adversely affect the impartiality of the assessment process. All conflicts of interest should be brought to the attention of the Chair of the assessment panel. Should a conflict of interest occur, effective controls must be put in place to address any probity risks concerning the conflict of interest.

The assessment panel Chair at the beginning of each assessment panel meeting will ask members to confirm previous conflicts of interest declarations are current and no new conflicts of interest have arisen. In the event a conflict of interest is declared the Chair will review the issue and take advice from the independent probity advisor on potential mitigations.

Conflict of Interest undertaking

The assessment panel (including advisors), members of the secretariat and the chairs must sign a confidentiality and conflict of interest undertaking.

Register of Conflicts of Interest

The Chair of the assessment panel will maintain a register of all potential conflicts of interests reported during the grants administration process. The Chair may delegate this role to the secretariat.

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Communications

5   Communications

The secretariat is responsible for the maintenance of a communications log in Content Manager which captures communications.

Grant questions

To protect the integrity of the assessment process, all external communications must be directed via email to the Grants general email inbox as outlined in the grant guidelines (HSSG-ImmunisationGrants@health.nsw.gov.au). Assessment panel members/ advisors should not directly contact grant applicants leading up to or during the application period.

If an applicant contacts an assessment panel member directly about an application, they should refer them to the Grants general email address and notify the Chair and the probity advisor.

Grant questions emailed to the Grants inbox will be responded to via a standard response (see below). Questions raised prior to and during the grant application process will be posted on a 'Frequently Asked Questions' tab on the website, available for all applicants to view.

> *"Thank you for your email regarding the Community Connectors for Immunisation Grant opportunities. Your questions will be responded to. Responses to questions that may impact equity and transparency of the application process will be published on NSW Health Community Connectors for Immunisation webpage. Please continue to check the website to ensure you remain updated on information."*

The final date for questions related to this Grant application will be 12pm (midday) 9th of May 2025.

General enquiries

During the assessment of grant applications, progress and results will not be communicated to applicants. If contacted by a prospective applicant, the assessment panel should decline the request and refer applicants to the grants general inbox and notify the Chair and the probity advisor.

Security

The assessment panel Chair is responsible for the security of responses submitted and all related documentation.

All responses and assessment documents will be secured during the assessment process under security arrangements designated by the assessment panel Chair, so these documents are not accessible by any person not directly involved in the assessment of the responses and administrative support staff.

All responses and assessment data will be treated as COMMERCIAL-IN-CONFIDENCE

Receipt of Applications

The applications are to be submitted electronically by email to: HSSG-ImmunisationGrants@health.nsw.gov.au.

- Email with attachments received from applicant – secretariat to check all attachments are included and can be opened.
- Where applications are incomplete or cannot be opened a response will be sent to the applicant advising them that the application cannot be accepted in that format.
- Applicants can resubmit within the grant opening period.

- Late resubmissions will be registered as a late response and may be considered by the assessment panel if the circumstances are deemed to be outside the organisation's control.
- Requests for short extensions may be considered in circumstances outside of the control of the applicants, however this remains at the discretion of the Chair. Requests should be made in writing and emailed to the contact inbox with the reason clearly stated before the grant closes.
- The secretariat is to send response emails to applicants confirming receipt of an application within two business days of receipt.
- The secretariat is to save applications to SharePoint folder with security access only to assessment panel members.
- Secretariat to maintain a log of all applications received (date received, dated confirmation receipt email sent and SharePoint reference where application is saved) under SharePoint.

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Assessment Process and Methodology

6 Assessment Process and Methodology

Overview

Opening of Secure Directory

The secure electronic directory will organise the responses by the date they are received. The probity officer will receive confirmation of the receipt date for all applications. The secretariat will notify all applicants to confirm receipt of applications. It is the responsibility of applicants to follow-up with the Grants inbox if they have not received confirmation that their application has been received.

Applications received after the due date will be marked as a late submission and may be considered by the assessment panel if the circumstances are deemed to be outside the organisation's control. A decision to accept a late submission must be documented as part of the eligibility assessment, including the rationale for the decision.

1. ### Eligibility Assessment

   This phase involves the assessment of eligibility, based on the applicant's response to, and provision of evidence, for each eligibility criterion.

   The secretariat will review each application against eligibility criteria and prepare a report on those identified as eligible and not eligible. The secretariat will forward this report and details of all applications to the assessment panel for their review and approval.

   Applicants may be confirmed as ineligible if they do not to meet one or more of the outlined eligibility criteria, at the discretion of the assessment panel.

   Applications that meet the eligibility criteria will be progressed by the assessment panel to step 2 for comprehensive review against the assessment criteria.

2. ### Assessment criteria

   #### Individual assessment against assessment criteria

   Each assessment panel member will conduct an individual assessment of each application, providing an individual score against each assessment criterion.

   #### Assessment panel discussion

   Following individual assessments, the assessment panel will convene to conduct a further joint review of all applications and provide a consensus score for each criterion within each application. Following this, the assessment panel will finalise the order of merit, applying discretion and consideration to areas of key concern for NSW Health, as outlined in the strategic risk assessment section of this plan.

   During this step, the assessment panel may seek advice from subject matter experts and/or financial advisors.

   An assessment report will be produced outlining the outcomes of the assessment and identifying applicants to be recommended for grants including proposed funding allocation.

   All assessment panel meetings will be documented by the secretariat and chaired by the Assessment Panel Chair. All members of the assessment panel must be present for any decisions to be validly made.

   #### Quorum

   All members of the assessment panel must be present for any decisions to be validly made.

   #### Clarifications

   The assessment panel may seek clarifications from applicants, via the secretariat who manages the Grants inbox, during the assessment process.

Reviewer

The Reviewer will review and endorse the assessment panel report and seek approval from the Decision Maker to award and administer the grants.

3. **Decision Maker**

The Decision Maker is the final decision maker for the grant funding. The Decision Maker will consider the recommendations of the assessment panel in this decision-making and provide final decision and sign-off on successful grant applicants.

The secretariat will contact all applicants of the outcome of their application, prior to the publication of successful applications on the grant website

Assessment of applications

Eligibility Criteria

The applicant is a registered not-for-profit organisation operating in NSW as listed in the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 (NSW) or the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth). Proof of registration includes a copy of their incorporation certificate showing the organisation's legal status. If unavailable, extracts from the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) or NSW Fair Trading or websites are acceptable.	Yes/No
The applicant currently works with CALD communities operating in at least one of the following LHDs: South Western Sydney, Western Sydney, South Eastern Sydney and/or Sydney LHDs.	Yes/No
The applicant possesses the appropriate insurances and licenses or commits to obtaining them if awarded funding. Small organisations may partner with larger entities that provide necessary coverage. If awarded funding, the organisation must provide a copy of its Public Liability Insurance (certificate of currency) before any funds are released.	Yes/No
The applicant has submitted their most recent financials for the previous financial year. This should be a copy of the most recent financial statement, approved by the Board of Directors (no more than two years old at the time of submission), and include the contact details for the auditor.	Yes/No
The applicant has disclosed details of any grant and/or funding previously or currently received from NSW Health. Include the title of the grant, year, priority area, amount, key achievements, outcomes.	Yes/No /NA
The applicant has disclosed other existing funding sources if relevant. This is required only if the co-funding impacts the scope or feasibility of the proposed project.	Yes/No /NA
The applicant commits to participating in an annual evaluation process, conducted by the designated academic training provider, to track project progress and outcomes and inform required amendments to the training material and/or resources.	Yes/No
The applicant has committed to providing a twice-yearly report, demonstrating activity against the project plan, recruitment to positions and funding utilisation.	Yes/No
The applicant commits to adhering to the NSW Code of Conduct and Core Values	Yes/No
The application is submitted by the due date. (Applications received after the due date will be marked as a late submission and may be considered by the assessment panel if the circumstances are deemed to be outside the organisation's control)	Yes/No
The application is complete, including all fields of the eligibility and assessment criteria questions. All required evidence is attached to the application. (Incomplete application forms may not be assessed)	Yes/No

Assessment criteria and scoring guide

Once the assessment panel have confirmed a list of eligible applications, panel members will assess eligible applications against the below assessment criteria below to produce an individual score for each criterion.

Criterion	Assessment question	Scoring guidance (1-10, where 1 is poor and 10 is excellent)	Total marks available	Weighting
Criterion 1: Project aligns with the grant program objectives and the project scope is clearly articulated, including target population(s)	Provide an overview of the project including: • background and scope • how it aligns with one or more of the Community for Connectors for Immunisation grant program objectives • specific target population(s) of the project Word limit: 300 words	**1–3**: Minimal detail provided about project background, scope, alignment with grant objectives, and target population(s). **4–6**: Reasonable explanation of project background and scope, alignment to a grant objective, and appropriate target population(s) specified. **7–10**: Strong explanation of project background and scope, with explanation of how this aligns with multiple grant program objectives. Clear articulation and rationale for selected target population(s).	10	15%
Criterion 2: Implementation plan contains required	Provide an implementation plan for the proposed project, including: • a project timeline, including start/end date, and key milestones	**1–3:** Minimal detail provided about project timeline and how milestones will be met, lack of detail about recruitment approach and inappropriate project planning to meet program objectives. Insufficient information about project governance.	10	20%

| level of detail and clearly outlines how the project will be planned, implemented and evaluated | • approach for how project milestones will be planned, implemented, monitored and evaluated
• recruitment approach for Community Connector(s) for Immunisation
• activities planned to increase vaccine acceptability and uptake
• governance arrangements

Word limit: 400 words | Overall low level of project planning, with low demonstrated feasibility and/or capability

4–6: Sufficient detail provided about timeline, planning, implementation and monitoring, and evaluation of project milestones. Recruitment approach and proposed activities are sound and meet program objectives. Sufficient information about governance structure. There are some gaps in information provided, but overall moderate level of project planning, with moderate demonstrated feasibility and/or capability.

7–10: Detailed timeline, detailed information about planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of project milestones. Recruitment approach and proposed activities clearly meet the program objectives. Robust project governance arrangements. Overall high-level project planning, with high demonstrated feasibility and capability.

Note: High scoring may be awarded with respect to the organisation's capacity and proven experience in implementing project outcomes (value for money), including:
• efficient and effective use of resources
• ability to produce beneficial and meaningful economic, social and cultural outcomes that align with the objectives. | | |
| **Criterion 3:** Reach, impact and capacity to provide services for CALD communities to foster | Provide an outline of how the proposed project will:
• reach and impact the CALD community sector
• be culturally appropriate and respond to the needs of CALD communities | **1–3:** Limited reach or impact of proposed project across the CALD community sector. Proposal does not sufficiently respond to needs of CALD communities, and/or adequately engage with CALD consumers, organisations and/or community representatives. Limited or insufficient support provided to Community Connectors for Immunisation to achieve program objectives | 10 | 20% |

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increased vaccine acceptance and uptake	• engage with CALD consumers, organisations and/or community representatives • support Community Connectors for Immunisation to effectively address linguistic, cultural, and health literacy barriers to vaccination Word limit: 300 words	**4–6:** Moderate reach across the CALD community sector. Appropriate proposal regarding provision of culturally appropriate services and engagement with CALD consumers, organisations and/or community representatives. Sufficient support provided to Community Connectors for Immunisation to achieve program objectives. **7–10:** Broad or significant reach across the CALD community sector. Robust proposal regarding provision of culturally appropriate services, and meaningful engagement with CALD consumers, organisations and/or community representatives. High level of support provided to Community Connectors for Immunisation to achieve program objectives.		
Criterion 4: Demonstrated existing relationships and partnerships in the community	Provide an outline of your organisation's: • demonstrated community relationships, including previous experience in delivering community health education or information sessions. • examples of methods for community outreach and feedback mechanisms, such as town halls, focus groups, informal consultations, etc. • existing collaborative relationships with Multicultural Health Services, Public Health Units and/or Primary Health Networks. Word limit: 300 words	**1–3:** Limited information on existing community relationships, with lack of relevant examples including existing collaborative relationship with Multicultural Health Services and/or LHDs. **4–6:** Reasonable level and relevance of information provided about existing community relationships, including an example of delivering community health or education projects. A sufficient example about community outreach and feedback is provided. An existing collaborative relationship with Multicultural Health Services and/or LHDs is outlined. **7–10:** Robust and highly relevant existing community relationships, with evidence of delivering meaningful community health or health education projects. Good examples of community outreach and feedback is outlined. Robust demonstration of existing collaborative relationships with Multicultural Health Services and/or LHDs is outlined.	10	30%
Criterion 5: Project budget	Provide a project budget, including the amount of funding requested for each year over the project timeframe until 30 June 2028.	**1–3:** Limited budget information provided, or budgeting presents poor value for money with respect to proposed outcomes.	10	15%

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| | | This should highlight efficient, effective and transparent budgeting to produce quality outcomes and value for money.

Project budgets may include, but are not limited to, the following:

• set up costs within the first year of the project.

• income and funding (including this grant).

• staff costs (including staffing mix, training and development). There will be no attendance cost for the Training of Trainer's program and Community of Practice, however proposals should allocate sufficient budget for Community Connectors to support their participation.

• administrative costs.

Word limit: 300 words | **4–6:** Budget provided that supports the outlined objectives and promotes justifiable use of resources.

7–10: Costs are clear, itemised and targets project objectives. All proposed budget items are within scope and demonstrate appropriate timeframe for acquittal.

Note: Considerations should be given with respect to value for money, such as:
• costs vs benefits
• effective and efficient use of resources | | |

Strategic risk assessment

The assessment panel may use discretion when choosing the final pool of preferred applicants from the order of merit, to ensure a diverse breadth of projects are selected that align with a variety of aims across the grants program. This may include the following attributes:

- Organisations proposing to work with communities that have been identified as having low vaccination coverage

- Organisations that have demonstrated good working relationships key stakeholders, such as Multicultural Health Services, Public Health Units and/or Primary Health Networks.

- Strengthen capacity and capability of the not-for-profit sector to increase community ability to engage with CALD priority populations.

- To fund grants that align with NSW Health policy objectives, whilst enhancing community support in CALD communities.

- A diverse range of activities with broad reach, which demonstrates the potential to deliver the grant program objectives.

- Programs providing enhanced support for a variety of priority populations identified within the Framework.

- Culturally appropriate programs.

- New and improved collaboration and partnerships with CALD communities, services, programs and organisations.

- Strategies promoting sustainability beyond the funding period.

Additionally, the assessment panel may discuss scoring and/or revise scores to differentiate the highest scoring applicant and the next highest scoring applicant, consistent with the program objectives and assessment criteria.

Clarifications

Applicants may be contacted to request clarification of their responses. Any request for further information shall be made through the Grants general inbox. Assessment panel members may not engage in any communication with applicants regarding the grant process. The details of discussions and interviews with applicants will be documented and retained on the project file.

Business as usual communication on matters not relating to the grant process between members of the assessment panel is allowable. Any communication relating to this grant process is governed by the rules of this assessment plan.

All requests for clarification of key aspects of responses and the replies are to be in writing and issued and received only via the Grants inbox, on behalf of the Chair of the assessment panel, or the secretariat if delegated by the Chair.

Assessment Report

Following completion of the grant assessment process and selection of preferred applicants, the assessment panel Chair will prepare an assessment report with the assistance of the secretariat,

recording the reasons for the recommended preferred applicant/s.

The assessment report will be the formal record of the assessment panel's work. It should include:
- an executive summary
- the composition of the assessment panel
- advisors (if any) and the extent of their involvement
- an outline of the scoring methodology
- an outline of the responses received and any issues that required clarification
- identification of preferred applications
- identification of applications suitable for funding in the event that any of the preferred applications do not proceed
- assessment panel findings and recommendations, along with assessment of each individual application against the assessment criteria (including justification of the recommendation and reasons for decisions and scores - this information is imperative as it assists in the applicant debrief process)
- issues to be negotiated with the preferred applicant/s (if any).

All members of the assessment panel will review and sign the final assessment report prior to this being progressed to the Reviewer for review and endorsement.

Debriefing unsuccessful applicants

The Chair will send a letter to each unsuccessful applicant upon execution of the contract with the successful organisations. The letter advises the applicant that it was unsuccessful.

The secretariat will facilitate debriefing of any applicant who requests such. The debriefing will be conducted by the Chair and at least one member of the panel and will advise the unsuccessful applicant/s on the following:

- background to the assessment process

- general comments regarding the assessment of the applicant's submission by the Panel against the eligibility and assessment criteria (but not against other applicants)

- general feedback regarding their submission (both positive and negative).

At no time will any response be compared specifically with any other response, in the debriefing session and no scoring details will be provided.

Any probity issues raised at a briefing will be forwarded to the probity advisor by the Chair or Secretariat.

Organisations with more than one application

An organisation may only submit one grant application for the program. If an organisation submits two applications for different value grants and/ or program initiatives, the Grants secretariat will contact the applicant to request that they choose their preferred application for submission.

Key dates

Key dates	Date
Applications open	12pm (midday) 27th March 2025
Applications close	12pm (midday) 9th May 2025
Selection panel meets	May 2025
Applicants are notified of the outcome of their application	June – July 2025
Grant agreements finalised (expected)	June – July 2025
Projects commence (expected)	July – August 2025