

Adults and Older People Grant Requirements

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention



Acknowledgement of Country

The Health and Community Services Directorate acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region.

We respect the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, and their continuing culture and contribution they make to the Canberra region and the life of our city.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Acronyms/Abbreviations

Acronym	Meaning
HCSD	Health and Community Services Directorate
NGO	Non-government organisation
SIP	Strategic Investment Plan

1.2 Definitions/ Glossary

Refer to the **Glossary** at the end of this document for key terms used in these guidelines.

1.3 Background and Policy Context

The ACT Government is committed to improving the wellbeing of all Canberrans through a coordinated and outcomes-focused approach to policy, planning and service delivery.

This includes a focus on supporting people to thrive across all stages of life, with particular emphasis on good mental health, resilience and wellbeing.

The Mental Health NGO Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) outlines the Government's approach to redesigning and investing in the non-government organisation (NGO) mental health sector. This investment is aimed at building a responsive, inclusive, and outcomes-focused NGO mental health system that meets the diverse needs of Canberrans.

This grant aligns with a range of Government policies and strategies, that are outlined in more detail in the SIP. These policy settings support a shift toward:

- more integrated and person-centred services
- a stronger focus on outcomes rather than activity
- improved access and equity across the service system

Information about the wider mental health service system is available in the SIP.

1.4 About the Grant

This grant opportunity supports the ACT Government's investment in the mental health NGO sector for adults and older people.

This grant opportunity aims to support the mental health and wellbeing of adults and older people through a number of targeted and integrated services.

This grant opportunity forms part of the ACT Government's Mental Health Commissioning approach. While funding is allocated through a grant process, assessment will consider not only the activities proposed, but also the extent to which services contribute to outcomes, address identified community needs, complement existing services, and strengthen the overall mental health service system. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate their contribution to a coordinated and integrated system of care, consistent with the Mental Health NGO Strategic Investment Plan.

1.5 Grant Objectives

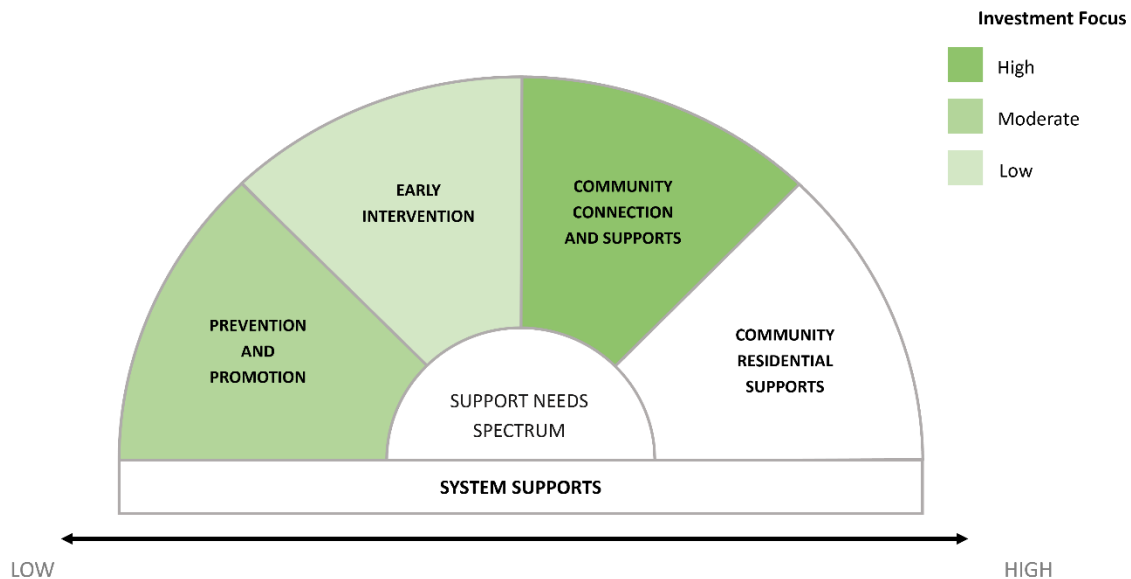
The objectives of this grant are to:

- support the mental health and wellbeing of adults and older people
- support adults and older people with complex and ongoing mental health needs
- provide targeted and integrated services

2. Grant Overview

2.1 Investment Focus

This grant opportunity supports the mental health and wellbeing of adults and older people through the delivery of services that operate across the Support Needs Spectrum.



Priority will be given to services that focus on, in order:

- **Community Connection and Supports**
 - Community Connection and Supports focuses on individuals in the community living with mental illness or complex and ongoing needs. This includes providing access to psychosocial support, which are critical components of supportive mental health systems. Psychosocial support services are community-based services that aim to identify and work towards non-clinical recovery goals, address impacts on functioning and help people to live independently in the community.
- **Prevention and Promotion**
 - These are services that are more population based, aimed at supporting environments or conditions that enhance mental health or reduce risk factors for mental ill-health. Examples of these services will often connect with places where people spend most of their time, such as in schools, workplaces or within the community.
- **Early Intervention**
 - Early Intervention focuses on mental health issues when they arise. Services in this area aim to prevent mental health symptoms from worsening, and to prevent people from requiring more intensive mental health services. Services can connect with and complement primary care services or publicly provided community-based mental health services.

Services may operate across one or multiple points of the Support Needs Spectrum. All approaches are recognised as contributing to a comprehensive mental health system.

Priority will be given to funding services that:

- Provide targeted supports to adults and older people with specific complex and ongoing needs, including but not limited to people with co-occurring alcohol and other drug needs, or people who are under housing stress or have become homeless.
- Support people with mental health needs who are exiting the detention system, including those leaving long term forensic mental health settings, and support reintegration and recovery.
- Provide access to psychosocial services that improve quality of life, social connections, or support other social determinants of health and wellbeing.
- Focus on the needs of specific groups such as LGBTIQ+, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people¹
- Recognise and support the role of carers and families.

The service types that may be funded under this grant include, but are not limited to:

- group support activities
- mutual support and self-help programs
- personalised support
- counselling, support, information and referral
- family and carer support
- care coordination
- mental health promotion
- mental illness prevention initiatives

2.2 Grant Outcomes

Services funded under this grant must contribute to Service and Personal Domain Outcomes outlined in the [Mental Health NGO Commissioning Strategic Investment Plan](#) and the [Mental Health Commissioning Framework](#).

These include:

Personal Domain Outcomes (applicants need to choose one or more relevant outcomes):

- people experience environments that promote mental wellbeing
- people are supported in help seeking and self-management of emerging needs
- people's mental health and wellbeing is supported across all aspects of their lives

¹ Mental Health Commissioning also includes \$1.1 million for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing Funding stream, which will focus directly on services specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. This grant process will open later in 2026 and only be open for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations to apply.

Service Domain Outcomes (applicants need to address all outcomes):

- services are accessible and culturally responsive (right care, right place, right time)
- services are delivered holistically, are safe, inclusive, trauma-informed and compliant with human rights
- services are collaborative, cohesive and address the full spectrum of a person's needs by coordinating across the sector
- services ensure people, carers and families are able to understand and move through the mental health system
- services ensure people with lived experience are central to service design, delivery and evaluation
- services are evidence-informed with a culture of continuous learning and improvement

2.3 Funding

Total funding available is **approximately \$3.5 million per year (GST exclusive)**.

Funding is expected to support a range of providers, service models and approaches to enhance service choice, sector sustainability and equitable access for service users across the ACT. The Territory intends to invest in a balanced portfolio of services that collectively contribute to the outcomes and priorities outlined in these Grant Requirements.

Funding may be awarded to one or more organisations. The Territory reserves the right to fund one or more applications, fund part of an application, negotiate funding levels, or allocate funding across different service types to achieve the best overall service system outcomes.

Applicants may propose a single service/program or multiple complementary services/programs within one application. Where multiple services/programs are proposed, applicants must clearly describe each component, demonstrate how they work together, identify the target population and expected outcomes for each component, and provide a clear breakdown of the funding sought. Applications will be assessed on both the merit of the individual service components and the overall contribution of the proposal to the objectives, outcomes and priorities of this grant opportunity.

Funding will be provided for an initial **5-year period**, with an option to extend for up to **2 additional years**.

Funding is indexed annually in line with community sector indexation rates.

2.4 Grant Period and Timeframe

Indicative timeframes for this grant opportunity are outlined below. These timeframes may be subject to change.

Activity	Expected Timeframe
Grant round opens	1 September 2026
Sector briefing	10 September 2026
Grant round closes	14 October 2026
Assessment of applications	October 2026 to January 2027
Delegate approval	February 2027
Notification of outcomes	February 2027
Contract negotiations	February to April 2027
Transition out period (existing providers)	30 March to 30 June 2027
Earliest start date of services	1 July 2027

2.5 Consideration of Existing Services

Applicants must consider mental health services in the ACT that are funded outside of the Mental Health Commissioning process when developing proposals. Consideration of how proposed services interact with, complement, or duplicate existing services will be an important part of the selection process.

Applicants should refer to the [Mental Health Strategic Investment Plan, Overview of Mental Health Services for Adult and Older People](#), sector information and other relevant resources.

3. Eligibility and Scope

3.1 Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for funding, applicants must:

- have an Australian Business Number (ABN) or Australian Company Number (ACN)
- be registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST)
- have an account with an Australian financial institution
- be financially viable to deliver the proposed service over the term of the grant

Applicants must be one of the following entity types:

- an incorporated organisation in Australia
- a company limited by guarantee
- an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust
- a joint (consortia) application with a lead organisation that would otherwise meet the criteria for individual organisations
- registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission

3.2 Ineligible Applicants

The following are not eligible to apply:

- Commonwealth, state, territory or local government agencies or bodies
- individuals
- unincorporated associations
- for-profit entities
- overseas organisations

3.3 Scope of Grant

This grant supports services that **support the mental health and wellbeing** of adults and older people.

Services must demonstrate alignment with the investment focus and outcomes outlined in Section 2.

Services must be delivered in the ACT.

3.4 Excluded Services

The following services are out of scope:

- services delivered by for-profit organisations
- government-operated services
- services that do not have a primary focus on mental health and wellbeing

3.5 Eligible Expenditure

Eligible expenditure includes direct and indirect costs that are required to deliver the funded service.

This may include:

- staffing and workforce costs
- service delivery costs
- materials and resources
- organisational overheads that support delivery

All expenditure must relate to the approved activities and be incurred during the grant period.

The Territory makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure under the grant. Should an organisation be selected as a preferred provider in a grant assessment process, eligible expenditure will be further discussed during contract negotiations.

3.6 Ineligible Expenditure

Grant funding must not be used for:

- purchase of land
- major capital works or construction
- costs associated with preparing the grant application
- activities already funded by another government program
- overseas travel
- activities for which another government body has primary responsibility

4. Service Requirements and Expectations

4.1 Service Description

This grant is to fund services that support the mental health and wellbeing of adults and older people including people with complex and ongoing needs.

As outlined in Section 2, funded services may include a range of approaches across the Support Needs Spectrum, with priority given to:

- Community Connection and Supports
- Prevention and Promotion
- Early Intervention

Services may operate across one or multiple points of the Support Needs Spectrum.

Applicants should clearly describe their service model, referral pathways, partnerships and their previous experience providing services and supporting target populations. These requirements and expectations are further outlined below.

4.2 Service Priorities

Services must demonstrate alignment with the Investment Focus described in Section 2.1 and contribute to the Grant Outcomes outlined in Section 2.2. Applicants should clearly articulate:

- the population groups they intend to support
- the identified needs or gaps their service responds to
- how the proposed service complements existing services and strengthens the broader mental health system
- how the service contributes to a coordinated, integrated and person-centred approach to care.

The Territory is seeking a balanced portfolio of services across the Support Needs Spectrum

4.3 Priority Population Groups

Applicants must demonstrate how services will respond to the needs of priority groups, including:

- carers and families of people with mental illness
- LGBTIQ+ adults and older people
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Applicants must clearly demonstrate how the organisation and proposed service delivery model will enhance access to services and contribute to improved health and wellbeing outcomes for one or more of the priority population groups. As outlined in the Service Domain Outcomes in Section 2.2, this will be expected for services specifically supporting priority populations, but also for more general services.

4.4 Core Service Requirements

Funded services must:

- deliver safe, inclusive and non-discriminatory services
- embed trauma-informed and culturally responsive practice
- involve people with lived experience in service design and delivery
- provide cohesive and coordinated services
- be evidence-informed and person-centred

4.5 Operational Requirements

Accreditation requirements

- Services must maintain accreditation (as appropriate) to provide services under the grant activity (e.g. National Safety and Quality Mental Health Standards for Community Managed Organisations)

Workforce requirements

- staff must have relevant qualifications, registrations and experience
- staff must hold Working with Vulnerable People registration (where applicable)

Risk management and business continuity

- applicants must maintain appropriate risk management frameworks
- services must have business continuity plans in place

Work health and safety

- services must comply with all relevant WHS legislation

Privacy and information management

- services must comply with ACT privacy, information management, including managing all Personal Health Information in accordance with the *Health Records (Privacy and Access) Act 1997*.
- In respect of any Personal Information (defined in section 8 of the *Information Privacy Act 2014* (ACT)) that is held in connection with the Contract, the Service provider must:
 - a. comply with the Territory Privacy Principles (TPPs) and any applicable TPP Code (sections 21(1) and (3) of the *Information Privacy Act* refer) as though the Service provider is a public sector agency and must not (and procure that any subcontractor engaged by the Service provider under this Agreement does not) act or engage in a practice that breaches a TPP or a TPP Code; and
 - b. co-operate with any reasonable requests or directions of the Territory arising directly from, or in connection with, the exercise of the functions of the Information Privacy Commissioner under the *Information Privacy Act*.

Sector collaboration and integration

- services must work collaboratively to achieve an integrated service system
- services must collaborate to provide holistic and coordinated care as required
- services must contribute to integrated service delivery

Client access and co-payments

- services should not require co-payments

4.6 Data and Information Sharing

Services must support appropriate data and information sharing to enable coordinated and effective service delivery.

This includes:

- exchanging timely and relevant information with other services and partners, where appropriate and in line with legislative requirements, to support referrals, and coordinated service delivery
- meeting reporting requirements (see section 10)
- ensuring information sharing practices are clear, consistent and support safe and effective service delivery
- using information to support collaboration, reduce duplication and improve client outcomes
- using data and information to inform service improvement and contribute to system-level understanding, including identifying emerging needs, service gaps and opportunities for better coordinated responses

5. Outcomes and Program Logic

5.1 Outcomes Framework

Services funded under this grant must contribute to one or more of the Personal Domain Outcomes and all Service Outcomes outlined in section 2.2.

More information about the Mental Health Commissioning Framework can be found in the [Mental Health NGO Commissioning Strategic Investment Plan](#) and the [Mental Health Commissioning Framework](#).

5.2 Program Logic Requirements

Applicants must identify how they will contribute to the outcomes through the development of a program logic that outlines the activities, measures and indicators to be used.

To develop a strong program logic, applicants are encouraged to read the [Mental Health Program Logics Guide](#).

Applicants are not required to use a specific template for their program logic. A range of templates are available to use and adapt including the [Mental Health Program Logic Template](#).

5.3 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Funded services must include monitoring, evaluation and learning activities to support continuous improvement and accountability.

This includes:

- collecting and reporting on agreed measures and indicators
- contributing to evaluation activities
- using data and feedback to improve service delivery

Further detail on reporting and performance expectations is provided in Section 10.

6. Application Process

6.1 How to Apply

Applications must be submitted through the ACT Government grants portal – SmartyGrants.

Applicants must complete all required sections of the application form and submit all requested information and attachments by the closing date.

6.2 Joint (Consortia) Applications

Applicants may partner with other organisations to deliver the proposed service.

A consortium must nominate a **lead organisation**. Only the lead organisation may submit the application and will enter into a grant agreement with the Territory.

The application must identify all consortium members and include a **letter of support from each partner organisation**. Each letter must:

- describe the organisation (including relevant experience and services)
- outline how it will work with the lead organisation and other partners
- describe governance and administrative arrangements, including decision-making, risk management, financial management and reporting
- confirm the organisation's roles, responsibilities and any resources it will contribute
- provide details of a management-level contact officer

Applicants must have a **formal arrangement** in place with all consortium members prior to execution of the grant agreement. The Territory may request a copy of this arrangement and supporting documentation (such as insurance or accreditation evidence).

The **lead organisation remains accountable** to the Territory for the delivery of all funded activities.

6.3 Key Dates and Timeframes

Key dates for the grant round are outlined in Section 2.4.

Applicants must submit their application within the specified opening and closing dates. Late applications will not be accepted, unless due to an error on the part of the Territory.

6.4 Grant Briefings

The Territory will hold a Sector Briefing during the application period.

Details of any briefings will be provided via the grants portal and relevant communication channels.

6.5 Questions and Clarifications

Applicants may submit questions or requests for clarification via email HCSDGrants@act.gov.au until 5 business days before the application period ends.

Responses to questions will be shared with all applicants. Answers will be available on the SmartyGrants landing page for each grant process.

For technical or process difficulties email HCSDGrants@act.gov.au and HCSD will respond within 3 working days.

HCSD cannot determine your eligibility or assist you to apply.

6.6 What Information to Provide

Applicants must:

- complete the mandatory requirements questions in SmartyGrants and upload a statutory declaration.
- complete the weighted criteria questions with any attachments.
- complete the non-weighted criteria questions including referees and budget information.

Where attachments are allowed in responses to different criteria, the attachment (visual or written) must:

- be clear and easy to understand
- add value to the written responses to criteria
- be referenced in the response and appropriately labelled

More information about each of these sections, including the questions in the form, is described in Section 7 Assessment process.

7. Assessment Process

Applications will be assessed through a structured process to ensure fair, transparent and consistent decision-making.

7.1 Overview of Assessment Process

The assessment process will include the following stages:

1. Eligibility and compliance screening
2. Assessment against mandatory criteria
3. Assessment against weighted criteria (including scoring)
4. Value for money and overall assessment
5. Approval of funding decisions

Only applications that meet the mandatory requirements will proceed to full assessment.

7.2 Eligibility and Compliance Screening

All applications will undergo an initial screening to confirm that:

- the applicant meets the eligibility requirements (Section 3)
- the application is complete and submitted within the required timeframe
- all mandatory requirements and documentation have been provided

Applications that do not meet these requirements may be excluded from further assessment.

7.3 Assessment Against Mandatory Criteria

Applications will be assessed against the mandatory criteria to determine compliance with governance, capacity and other essential requirements. These questions are designed to confirm baseline governance and compliance requirements.

Mandatory Assessment Criteria	
Grant governance/compliance questions (Yes/No response)	
This declaration assures the Territory that the grant recipient has the capacity to govern, plan and manage the required service/program in accordance with ACT Government policies and procedures, and industry and legislative requirements. Applicants must complete the compliance and governance declaration as part of their grant application within SmartyGrants. If you answer No to questions 1- 10 (and 12 if relevant), or Yes to 11, you must provide supplementary explanation/commentary and appropriate evidence as part of their Grant Requirement response. Applicants must complete, have witnessed and uploaded into SmartyGrants a Statutory Declaration to support responses to the Governance and Compliance Declaration.	
MC1	Does the applicant have a Board or similar governance structure that oversees its function, processes, and funding? Note: <i>The applicant must be able to provide evidence of structures and processes during the application process, and the term of the grant <u>if requested by the Territory</u>.</i>
MC2	Does the applicant have a formal process which describes how the organisation ensures continuous quality improvement? Note: <i>The applicant must be able to provide evidence of formal processes during the application process, and the term of the grant <u>if requested by the Territory</u>.</i>
MC3	Does the applicant have a formalised approach to ensure cultural competency including staff training and experience in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people? Note: <i>The applicant must provide evidence of formal approach during the application process, and the term of the grant <u>if requested by the Territory</u>.</i>
MC4	Does the applicant have a formal process which describes how the organisation obtains, uses, stores and shares information in line with relevant national/Territory legislation and policy (e.g., confidentiality, information security and specific technology/data management systems, policies and practices used by the organisation)? Note: <i>The applicant must be able to provide evidence of formal processes during the application process, and the term of the grant <u>if requested by the Territory</u>.</i>
MC5	Does the applicant have a formal process which describes how risks are identified, managed, and reported? Note: <i>The applicant must be able to provide evidence of formal processes during the application process, and the term of the grant <u>if requested by the Territory</u>.</i>

MC6	Does the applicant have appropriate insurance to cover delivery of the service/program (including public liability and professional indemnity insurance, if required as specified in Grant Requirements above). Note: <i>The applicant <u>must upload evidence/copies of insurance</u> to the application form and then as they expire during the term of the grant.</i>
MC7	Does the applicant hold relevant accreditation and do personnel possess appropriate qualifications and certifications (as required by the approach/model of service delivery), for example: • Relevant accreditation standards/requirements • Relevant industry/role certifications (e.g., Working with Vulnerable People registration) • Relevant professional qualification/registration (e.g., Certificate IV in Mental Health or Australian Health Practitioner Regulation, etc.) Note: <i>The applicant must be able to provide evidence of accreditation, qualification or certification during the application process, and the term of the grant <u>if requested by the Territory</u></i>
MC8	Is the applicant financially viable to support the sustainable delivery of the approach/model of service delivery over the term of the grant agreement, and can the applicant provide the last 3 years of audited financial statements? Note: <i>The applicant <u>must upload evidence/copies of audited financial statements</u> during the application process, and the term of the grant if requested by the Territory.</i>
MC9	Is the applicant compliant with relevant legislation, regulation, and policy (as required by the approach/model of service delivery), for example: • relevant Commonwealth and Territory legislation (e.g., Aged Care Act, Australian Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Aged Care Quality Standards, Carers Recognition Act, work health and safety legislation and privacy legislation) • ACT Government policy, including 'fair and ethical treatment of workers and prioritisation of local and secure employment.' • The successful Respondent is required to be compliant with ACT policy priorities, and where applicable Secure Local Jobs Code (SLJC) certification. Where SLJC certification is not applicable, it is highly recommended that the successful Respondent is SLJC certified or is working towards certification. Note: <i>The Respondent must be able to provide evidence of compliance <u>if requested by the Territory</u>.</i>
MC10	Does the applicant agree to all service requirements under the grant, or their justification for disagreement is satisfactory for an exemption? Note: <i>You will be asked to explain this in your application.</i>

MC11	Does the applicant have issues or risks* to disclose which may impact their ability/capacity to deliver the service/program, or which may adversely impact the reputation of the applicant organisation or the Territory as the funding provider? <i>*risks include any disciplinary action (current or historical) on the part of the organisation taken by a funding body, criminal/civil action taken against the organisation or staff members/grant recipient in the context of their employment, critical incidents, or failed accreditation, or if any of the services may be sub-contracted.</i> Note: If yes, the applicant <u>must upload additional information in the application form</u> and as they become aware of the risks or issues during the term of the grant.
Additional question for applicants involved in a consortium	
MC12	Can the applicant provide letters of commitment from all agencies identified in a consortium as well as consortium governance arrangements (including financial management, risk management and reporting arrangements)? Note: The applicant <u>must upload these documents in the application form</u> and updated documents during the term of the grant as updates occur.

Applications must meet all mandatory criteria to proceed to the next stage of assessment.

7.4 Assessment of Weighted Criteria

Applications that meet the mandatory criteria will be assessed against the weighted criteria.

Assessment will consider:

- the quality and completeness of responses
- alignment with the objectives and priorities of the grant
- the strength of the proposed service model and outcomes

WC	Weighted Criteria	Weighted score
WC 1	Service/program to be delivered under the grant.	/55
1a	Describe the service/program your organisation is proposing to deliver under the grant. Responses must address each of the following components of this criteria: • Characteristics of the proposed service/program • Eligibility criteria and/or population cohorts • Approaches the service/program will use to support priority population groups • Proposed service capacity, including expected throughput and outcomes of participants	/20

	- Proposed service location/s including geographic location of the service, modes of delivery including and any outreach components. - Proposed staffing coverage (including expected FTE) and rosters To complete this section, please be familiar with the Mental Health NGO Strategic Investment Plan. Word limit: 1,000 words One attachment (visual or written) may be uploaded. The attachment should be clear and easy to understand and serve a purpose to enrich the content of the written response. The attachment must be referenced in the written response and properly labelled.	
1b	Through a program logic, describe how the proposed service/program will contribute to Personal Domain Outcomes 1, 2 and/or 3 and all Service Domain Outcomes listed in the section 2.2 Grant Outcomes. The program logic must outline the activities of the proposed service as well as the Indicators and Measures the proposed service/program will use to measure progress towards Personal and Service Domain Outcomes. The program logic should be clear and easy to understand. To support your response to this criterion, provide a written response that outlines: - the rationale and thought processes underpinning the design and development of the program logic - How the service/program will embed carer and family experience in service design, delivery and evaluation - An overview of the systems and processes your organisation have established or intend to implement to ensure the collection, recording and reporting of meaningful data. - An overview of how qualitative feedback and information such as positive and negative feedback and cases studies will be recorded, reported and used. Word limit: 1,000 words Attach a program logic to support your response to this criterion.	/25

1c	Describe the evidence underpinning or informing your proposed service model and delivery practices. Evidence could include: • Research Evidence: Derived from academic research, typically published in scientific journals. • Contextual Evidence: Includes information from organisations and governments that highlight local needs or the needs of specific groups. • Experiential Evidence: Comes from professional expertise, skills, and practice knowledge, including input from those with lived experience of mental ill health. Word limit: 500 words One attachment (visual or written) may be uploaded. The attachment should be clear and easy to understand and serve a purpose to enrich the content of the written response. The attachment must be referenced in the written response and properly labelled.	/10
2	Relevant Experience	/20
2a	Demonstrate your organisational experience delivering mental health services that are tailored to the needs of priority populations. Your response should detail how your organisation has ensured accessible, culturally responsive practices, tailored to the needs of priority population groups. Word limit: 500 words One attachment (visual or written) may be uploaded. The attachment should be clear and easy to understand and serve a purpose to enrich the content of the written response. The attachment must be referenced in the written response and properly labelled.	/10
2b	Demonstrate organisational experience working collaboratively with non-government sector partners, government programs and the Canberra community including how the approaches your organisation has used to initiate, build and maintain these relationships. Please see Service Domain Outcomes 3 and 4 in the Commissioning Framework. Word limit: 250 words One attachment (visual or written) may be uploaded. The attachment should be clear and easy to understand and serve a purpose to enrich the content of the written response. The	/10

	attachment must be referenced in the written response and properly labelled.	
3	Organisational Capacity and Workforce Sustainability	/25
3a	Identify capacity and resourcing your organisation has in place to support the delivery of the proposed service including: • The anticipated timeline for reaching 100% operational capacity; • Existing resources, assets and staffing the organisation has to deliver the proposed service. • <i>(If relevant)</i> Demonstrate access to, or plans to procure/recruit appropriate equipment, assets, staffing and resources required to deliver the proposed service/program. • Articulate the roles and responsibilities of key personnel involved with the proposed service/program, including positions, professional qualifications and registrations held (if required by the role and/or legislation). Word limit: 500 words One attachment (visual or written) may be uploaded. The attachment should be clear and easy to understand and serve a purpose to enrich the content of the written response. The attachment must be referenced in the written response and properly labelled.	/10
3b	Describe how your organisation will support workforce sustainability through the development, wellbeing and safety of staff and/or volunteers. Your response should include: • Organisational processes that support a psychologically and physically safe workplace. • Access to training, supervision or other professional development opportunities • Existing and proposed workforce development activities/initiatives Word limit: 750 words One attachment (visual or written) may be uploaded. The attachment should be clear and easy to understand and serve a purpose to enrich the content of the written response. The attachment must be referenced in the written response and properly labelled.	/15

7.5 Scoring Methodology

Each weighted criterion will be scored using the following scale.

Assessment Criteria Scoring Matrix		
Descriptor	Response to Assessment Criteria	Score /10
Outstanding	Response to Weighted Assessment Criterion far exceeds all the relevant requirements and provides significant additional value to the Territory. Response demonstrates an outstanding understanding of the requirements as assessed against the Weighted Assessment Criterion and presents a strategic view of the requirement within the broader Territory context. Information provided is concise, extensive and offers some knowledge gain to the Territory. All claims are fully substantiated.	10
Excellent	Response to Weighted Assessment Criterion exceeds all the relevant requirements such that the Territory will receive some additional value above the grant requirements. Response demonstrates an excellent understanding of the requirements as assessed against the Weighted Assessment Criterion. Information provided is comprehensive. All claims are fully substantiated.	9
Very Good	Response to Weighted Assessment Criterion meets all the relevant requirements and exceeds some relevant requirements such that the Territory will receive minor value above the grant requirements for those. Response demonstrates a very good understanding of the requirements as assessed against the Weighted Assessment Criterion. All claims are soundly substantiated. Some minor omissions in substantiation may be evident; however the overall claim is well supported.	8
Good	Response to Weighted Assessment Criterion meets all the relevant requirements and may marginally exceed some relevant requirements. Response demonstrates a good understanding of the requirements as assessed against the Weighted Assessment Criterion. Some insignificant uncertainties are evident; however claims or documentation contains most of the information expected of this Weighted Assessment Criterion.	7
Adequate	Response to Weighted Assessment Criterion meets all the relevant requirements. Response demonstrates an adequate understanding of the requirements as assessed against the Weighted Assessment Criterion. Some minor uncertainties or information gaps are evident; however claims or documentation generally contains the information expected of this Weighted Assessment Criterion.	6
Reservations	Response to Weighted Assessment Criterion meets most of the relevant requirements. Response demonstrates a general understanding of the requirements as assessed against the Weighted Assessment Criterion; however, detail is lacking in specific areas. Some uncertainties or information gaps are evident within the key requirements.	5
Poor	Response to Weighted Assessment Criterion does not meet a minority of the relevant requirements.	4

Response demonstrates a poor understanding of the requirements as assessed against the Assessment Weighted Assessment Criterion, with some shortcomings or deficiencies noted.

Claims and documentation omit or are unable to substantiate key requirements of the Weighted Assessment Criterion.

Very Poor	Response to Weighted Assessment Criterion does not meet a majority of the relevant requirements.	3
	Response does not demonstrate an understanding of the requirements as assessed against the Weighted Assessment Criterion, through lack of provided detail or information.	
	Claims and documentation omit or are unable to substantiate requirements of the Weighted Assessment Criterion.	
Inadequate	Response to Weighted Assessment Criterion meets only a negligible number of the relevant requirements.	2
	Response demonstrates a minor misunderstanding of the requirements as assessed against the Weighted Assessment Criterion. Significant flaws in approach are evident.	
	Claims and documentation are largely unsubstantiated.	
Not Acceptable	Response to Weighted Assessment Criterion does not meet any of the relevant requirements.	1
	Response demonstrates a significant misunderstanding of the requirements as assessed against the Weighted Assessment Criterion. The response lacks fundamental details to address this Weighted Assessment Criterion.	
	Claims and documentation are unsubstantiated and unreliable.	
Not able to access	Response did not address this Weighted Assessment Criterion. (NOTE: There needs to be confirmed evidence of this circumstance).	0
	Response was not evaluated, as it did not provide any requested information.	

Guidance Note: During *Phase 2 of Stage 3 - Assessment*, each Assessment Panel member must assess and score each Response for each Weighted Assessment Criterion using the Scoring Scale Table. A total weighted score for each Response will be calculated from the sum of each individual Weighted Assessment Criterion rating and multiplied by the individual Weighted Assessment Criterion weighting.

Following discussion and moderation of scores by Assessment Panel members, the agreed consensus score provides the overall score for each Weighted Assessment Criterion. All Weighted Assessment Criteria consensus scores will be multiplied by their respective weighting with the resulting figures tallied to give a total score out of a possible 100% for each Response.

NOTE: The descriptions in the "Response to Assessment Criterion" column is intended to act only as guidance on assessing ratings. They are not intended to be wholly exclusive of the issues to be taken into account, nor to be applied literally.

Scores will reflect the extent to which the application:

- addresses the requirements of the criterion
- demonstrates a clear, evidence-informed and feasible approach
- meets the intent of the grant and expected outcomes

Assessors will score each criterion independently. The panel will then discuss to:

- ensure consistency in scoring across applications
- address any significant differences in assessment
- confirm a final agreed score for each criterion

7.6 Non-Weighted Criteria

The Territory will also consider non-weighted criteria to inform the overall assessment and funding decisions.

NW	Non-weighted criteria
NW1	Measurement and reporting You have provided indicators and measures as part of your program logic. Articulate how you will measure and report on the outputs and outcomes of the services, including consideration of: • Data management software (e.g., what systems and processes you will utilise to measure identified outcomes) • Other mechanisms and/or tools to collect evidence • Measurement methodologies (e.g., sample group, timepoints for data collection, context of data collection) • Measurement tool/s Tip: This should align with Section 5 – Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, and Section 10 – Reporting requirements. Word Limit: 500 words
NW2	Risks and Challenges Identify risks and challenges which may impact the service/program to be delivered, and sustainability of the sector*, and articulate how they will be addressed by your organisation (including opportunities for innovation). Complete and upload the Risk Assessment Template to respond to this criterion. <i>* (e) Risks and challenges may include (but are not limited to) workforce issues, client/population demographics and need, funding, the legal/policy environment, quality and safety, consortia arrangements, reputation and relationships, communications, technology and advancement, evidence, agency, and advocacy. If any of the services may be sub-contracted, that should be addressed as a risk. If the service is high risk, describe the processes the organisation has in place to manage this.</i>
NW3	Budget Provide a breakdown of how the annual grant funding will be used to deliver the service under the grant. Please include: • Direct costs associated with service/program delivery - with a clear breakdown of each itemised cost for the financial year. Direct costs may include (but are not limited to): ○ Staffing ○ Equipment hire ○ Consumables • Indirect costs which will support organisational capability over the life of the grant –with a clear breakdown of each itemised cost for the financial year. Indirect costs may include (but are not limited to):

	○ Assets ○ Administration ○ Rent ○ Utilities ○ Communications ○ Insurance ○ Accreditation Tips: Provide your budget on the template provided in SmartyGrants. The ACT Costing Tools may be helpful when developing your budget. When providing your itemised costings, provide as detailed a breakdown as possible (e.g., Number of nurses versus number of administrators etc)
NW4	Funding Sources State if the proposal is dependent on another funding source. If so, specify the source/s and explain the implications for service delivery if the additional funding is not obtained. Clearly describe any dependencies between parts of the proposed service and different grant processes. Word Limit: 500 words
NW5	Referees Provide contact details for 2 referees who could substantiate documented experience. Note: <i>these referees may be contacted during the assessment process to verify your claims against the criterion.</i>

Non-weighted criteria will be used to support decision-making but will not be individually scored.

Applicants will also be asked to identify any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest as part of their application.

7.7 Value for Money Assessment

The Territory will assess the overall value for money of each proposal. In assessing value for money, the Territory will consider not only the efficiency of the proposed service, but also its contribution to outcomes, service system integration, equity of access, and alignment with commissioning priorities.

This includes consideration of:

- the relationship between cost and expected outcomes
- the quality and effectiveness of the proposed service
- risks associated with delivery
- the extent to which the proposal complements or overlaps with existing services

Value for money is not limited to cost and will consider the broader impact of the proposal (see glossary).

7.8 Assessment Panel

Applications will be assessed by a panel of ACT Government representatives and/or subject matter experts.

All assessors and decision-makers involved in the grant process will be required to declare any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest. Where a conflict of interest is identified, it will be managed in accordance with ACT Government policies and procedures.

The Territory is committed to ensuring that all stages of the grant process are conducted fairly, consistently and transparently.

Appropriate probity measures will be applied to ensure that:

- all applicants are treated equitably
- assessment decisions are based on the published criteria
- confidentiality of applicant information is maintained

The panel will:

- work within ACT Government probity and conflict of interest frameworks
- review and score applications
- participate in moderation discussions
- identify strengths, risks and key considerations
- consider overall balance of the service system
- provide recommendations to the Delegate

The panel may:

- seek guidance, clarification or additional information from experts, where there is no conflict of interest in seeking this support.
- use information provided in your application and information from any previous or current HCSD applications in its assessment.
- seek additional information from applicants where required.

7.9 Grant Approval

Final funding decisions will be made by the Delegate.

The Delegate will consider:

- assessment panel recommendations
- value for money
- availability of funding

- strategic priorities

The Delegate's decision is final.

7.10 Notification of Outcomes

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application in writing.

Feedback may be provided to unsuccessful applicants on request.

7.11 Complaints

If you have a complaint about the grant process, you should submit it in writing to the Territory.

Complaints will be handled in accordance with ACT Government complaints management processes.

Submitting a complaint does not affect your right to seek other review processes.

8. Successful Respondents

8.1 Contract Negotiations

Following notification, the Territory may undertake contract negotiations with successful applicants.

This may include:

- confirming service scope and delivery arrangements
- refining performance measures and outcomes
- finalising budgets and funding allocations

Applicants are expected to participate in good faith and provide any additional information required.

8.2 Grant Agreement

After being notified of their successful application, applicants will be required to formally engage into the negotiation of a grant agreement.

The grant agreement will outline:

- the funded activities and service requirements
- reporting and performance expectations
- payment arrangements
- governance and compliance requirements

Funding will not be released until the grant agreement has been executed by both parties.

8.3 Transition requirements

Transition refers to the process of implementing new or changed service arrangements following the grant process.

Transition activities may be required for both successful and unsuccessful applicants to support continuity of services and minimise disruption.

All applicants are expected to participate in transition activities where required and to prioritise continuity of support and the wellbeing of service users.

Transition must be managed in accordance with current agreements and/or the ACT Government Human Services System Transition Policy.

8.4 Payment Arrangements

Payment will be made in accordance with the grant agreement.

This may include:

- scheduled payments (for example, quarterly or milestone-based)
- payments linked to performance or reporting requirements

Applicants must have appropriate financial management systems in place to manage grant funding.

8.5 Reporting and Performance Monitoring

Successful applicants will be required to:

- collect and report on agreed data and performance measures
- participate in monitoring, evaluation and learning activities
- contribute to continuous improvement processes

Further detail on reporting and performance expectations is provided in Section 10.

8.6 Ongoing Compliance Requirements

Funded organisations must:

- comply with all relevant legislation, policies and standards
- maintain required insurances, registrations and accreditations
- meet all requirements outlined in the grant agreement

The Territory may request evidence of compliance at any time during the grant period.

8.7 Variations

Any changes to the funded service, including scope, delivery model or budget, must be approved by the Territory.

Requests for variations must be submitted in writing and supported by appropriate justification.

9. Additional Information

9.1 Reservation of rights

The Territory reserves the right to:

- not fund any application
- fund part of an application
- fund one or more applications for the same or similar services
- negotiate with one or more applicants
- vary the amount of funding available
- suspend, cancel or vary the grant process at any time

9.2 Use of information

Information provided in applications will be used to assess proposals and future investment priorities and may be shared within the ACT Government for this purpose.

The Territory will handle all information in accordance with relevant privacy legislation and policies.

9.3 No obligation to fund

Submitting an application does not guarantee funding.

Funding decisions are at the discretion of the Territory.

9.4 Costs of applying

Applicants are responsible for any costs associated with preparing and submitting an application.

The Territory will not be liable for any costs incurred through participation in this grant process.

9.5 Amendments to the grant process

The Territory may amend these guidelines or the grant process at any time.

Any changes will be communicated to applicants through appropriate channels.

10. Contract Management and Reporting

This section outlines the requirements for contract management, reporting, performance monitoring and engagement following the award of funding.

Funded organisations must comply with all requirements set out in the grant agreement and any additional directions provided by the Territory.

10.1 Reporting Requirements

Funded organisations must provide regular reports to the Territory in accordance with the grant agreement.

Reporting requirements may include:

- **performance reports**, demonstrating delivery against agreed activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators
- **financial reports**, detailing expenditure of grant funding
- **data reporting**, aligned with agreed outcomes and program logic
- **ad hoc or additional reporting**, where requested by the Territory
- **critical incident reporting**, as required

Reporting must:

- be accurate, complete and submitted on time
- align with agreed reporting formats and requirements
- support accountability for the use of public funds

Reporting requirements will be proportionate to the size, scope and risk of the funded service.

10.2 Performance Management

The Territory will partner with you to monitor the performance of funded services to ensure they are:

- achieving intended outcomes
- delivering agreed activities and outputs with a focus on continuous improvement
- contributing to an integrated service system
- meeting service quality and safety expectations

Performance management may include:

- review of reports and data
- monitoring of service delivery against agreed targets or outputs
- assessment of progress toward outcomes
- identification and management of risks or underperformance

Where performance issues are identified, the Territory may:

- request additional information or clarification
- require improvements or corrective actions
- provide support to strengthen service delivery

Sustained underperformance may result in escalation in accordance with the grant agreement.

10.3 Meetings and Engagement

Funded organisations are expected to participate in meetings and engagement activities to support effective contract management and service delivery.

This may include:

- regular contract management meetings
- participation in program or sector meetings
- engagement with the Territory on service delivery, performance and emerging issues
- contributing to collaboration and coordination across the sector

Meetings and engagement activities support:

- shared understanding of service delivery expectations
- identification of emerging needs and issues
- continuous improvement and system coordination

10.4 Contract Management and Governance

The Territory will oversee contract management and governance arrangements to ensure funded services are delivered effectively and in line with government priorities.

Funded organisations must:

- comply with all terms and conditions of the grant agreement
- maintain appropriate governance arrangements to support service delivery
- participate in relevant governance or oversight structures, where required
- support coordinated and integrated service delivery across the system
- notify the Territory of any significant risks, issues or changes that may affect delivery

Governance arrangements may include participation in:

- program-level or sector-wide forums
- coordination mechanisms to support integration and collaboration
- monitoring and evaluation activities

Contract management processes will be proportionate to the complexity, scale and risk of the funded service.

These are long term contracts. ACT Government intends to move towards a relational approach to contract management over time. This reflects a shift

- away from rigid, compliance-driven contracts
- towards collaborative and flexible arrangements
- to establishing shared expectations and trust
- that embeds adaptability to better respond to complex needs.

11. Glossary

This glossary explains key terms used in these guidelines. It supports a consistent understanding of program design, service delivery, assessment and reporting requirements.

Use these definitions together with the context in the document.

A

Activity

Specific actions or tasks delivered as part of a program or service.

Applicant

An organisation that applies for funding under a grant process.

C

Carer

A person who provides unpaid care or support to someone with disability, illness or other needs.

Commissioning

The process the Territory uses to plan, design, fund and monitor services to meet community needs.

Community Sector Indexation

The annual funding increase applied by the Territory to help organisations meet rising costs.

Consortium

A group of organisations working together to deliver services under one application, led by a single organisation.

D

Delegate

The authorised decision-maker who approves grant outcomes.

Direct costs

Costs that can be clearly linked to delivering a specific service or activity.

E

Evidence-based model

A service or program approach that has been shown to be effective through research and tested methods.

Evidence-informed model

A service or program approach that draws on research, practice knowledge and local context to guide design and delivery.

F

Financial report

A report that shows how grant funding has been spent.

G

Grant

A financial contribution provided by the Territory to support specific projects, programs or services. Grants are awarded to eligible organisations to deliver agreed activities and outcomes. Recipients must meet reporting, performance and accountability requirements.

Grant period

The total duration of the funding agreement, including any extensions.

Grant recipient

An organisation that has signed a funding agreement with the Territory and receives grant funding to deliver approved activities.

I

Indicator

A measurable sign of progress toward an outcome.

Indirect costs

Costs that support overall operations but cannot be directly linked to a single service or activity.

Information sharing

The exchange of relevant data and information between services or organisations to support coordinated, safe and effective service delivery, in line with legislative requirements.

Integrated service model (how a service is delivered)

A coordinated approach where multiple types of support are delivered together, or in close partnership, to provide holistic and connected care for individuals and families.

Integrated service system (how services connect across the sector)

A coordinated network of services that work together to provide connected and holistic support.

L

Lead organisation

The organisation responsible for submitting a consortium application and managing the funding agreement.

O

Outcome

The change or impact that occurs as a result of delivering a service or program. Outcomes may be short, medium or long term. For this commissioning process, these are further defined in the [Commissioning Framework](#) or in Section 2.2 of this Grant Requirements.

P

Performance report

A report that demonstrates how a service is performing against agreed activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators.

Priority population group

Specific groups identified by the Territory as requiring targeted or additional support due to higher levels of need or barriers to access.

Program

A coordinated set of activities or services designed to achieve specific outcomes for a target group.

Program logic

A structured representation of how a program is expected to work. It shows the links between inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes, and explains how change is expected to occur.

R

Reporting (outcomes and performance)

The process of collecting, analysing and presenting information about how a service or program is delivered and what it achieves. This includes reporting on activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators to demonstrate progress, effectiveness, and compliance with funding and contractual requirements.

S

Sector

The network of organisations delivering related services within the ACT.

Service

A set of supports, interventions or activities provided to individuals, families or communities to meet identified needs and improve outcomes.

Service capacity

The level of service delivery an organisation can provide, including the number of participants supported, service volume, and available workforce and resources

Service model (also called model of service delivery)

A structured explanation of how a service is designed and delivered, including its purpose, target group, activities, delivery approach, and how outcomes will be achieved and measured.

Service provider

An organisation funded to deliver services under a grant agreement.

Service user

A person who accesses, uses, or has recently used a service, and, where relevant, their family or carers.

Stakeholder

Individuals, groups or organisations with an interest in, or affected by a program or service. This includes service users, families, providers, government and community organisations.

T

Target population

The group of people a service is designed to support, based on shared characteristics such as age, location, needs or circumstances.

Theory of change

A clear explanation of how and why a service or program is expected to achieve its intended outcomes. It describes the pathways, assumptions and conditions required for change to occur.

Transition

The process of moving from one service arrangement to another, including transferring service delivery or adapting services to new requirements.

V

Value for money

An assessment of how well a proposed service or program delivers desired outcomes relative to its cost, risk and overall quality. It considers effectiveness, appropriateness, sustainability and impact, and how well the service complements other services. Value for money is not based only on lowest cost.

W

Workforce

The staff and volunteers engaged in delivering a service, including their skills, qualifications and experience.