



**Youth Opportunities
PROGRAM GUIDELINES
2017-18**

**Participation and Inclusion Directorate
Department of Family and Community Services**

Applications must be received by 5:00 pm Monday 26 June 2017
Applications received after this date may not be considered

For further information go to: www.youth.nsw.gov.au

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About the Guidelines:

- These guidelines provide a description of the *Youth Opportunities* program, its aim and objectives, and information about the grant process.
- All applicants are advised to read these Program Guidelines carefully before completing an application for funding.
- The program guidelines will form part of the Funding Agreement.
- Compliance with the Funding Agreement will be monitored throughout the life of the projects (refer to section 7 Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation).

1 Overview

1.1 Introduction

The *Youth Opportunities* program provides one-off, time-limited grants of up to \$50,000 to non-government organisations and local government to fund new projects that enable young people to participate in community development activities.

The *Youth Opportunities* program is managed by the Participation and Inclusion Directorate, Department of Family and Community Services. Information on the Department of Family and Community Services is available at <http://www.facs.nsw.gov.au>.

2 NSW Government Priorities

2.1 Priorities for young people in NSW

Premier's Priorities

The NSW Government's major commitments are outlined in the Premier's Priorities announced in 2015. Priorities specifically impacting on young people include:

- reducing youth homelessness
- protecting children and young people at risk of harm
- improving education results
- boosting apprenticeships.

Action is being taken to address these priorities through cross-agency coordination and targeted investment throughout government.

Further information on the *Premier's Priorities* can be found online at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/improving-nsw/premiers-prioriti>

NSW Strategic Plan for Children and Young People

The NSW Strategic Plan for Children and Young People (2016-2019) advocates that children and young people in NSW be safe, connected, respected, healthy and well, with opportunities to thrive and have their voice heard in their communities.

Further information on the *NSW Strategic Plan for Children and Young People 2016-2019* can be found online at <http://www.acyp.nsw.gov.au/plan>

NSW Department of Family and Community Services Strategic Statement

The NSW Department of Family and Community Services Strategic Statement sets out the Department's vision - *all people are empowered to live fulfilling lives and achieve their potential in inclusive communities*.

The Participation and Inclusion Directorate is responsible for the delivery of a range of programs that promote and enhance community participation. These programs aim to make it easier for all people to be involved in their communities.

3 Program Description

3.1 About the Youth Opportunities program

The *Youth Opportunities* program is based on evidence which shows that with the proper support and opportunity all young people can address and overcome a range of risk factors in their lives.

Projects funded under the *Youth Opportunities* program are expected to involve young people in all aspects of the project (initiating, leading, managing and participating). Projects which are genuinely youth-led and youth-driven are those initiated by young people in response to what they have said they need.

We are seeking applications which address young people's identified needs in an innovative way and increase young people's connections to the community. Organisations must have spoken with young people prior to submitting an application.

3.2 Key Principles

Youth Opportunities is based on the principles of:

- inclusiveness for all young people
- community participation
- community service (including volunteering)
- partnering with young people in the development of community based networks.

3.3 Program Aim and Objectives

Aim:

To provide time-limited grants for new projects that enable young people to lead and participate in community development activities.

Objectives:

The objectives of the program are to:

1. increase the number of youth-led and youth-driven community activities throughout NSW
2. engage young people in projects which overcome barriers to participation in the community
3. enable young people to develop and strengthen teamwork, communication, leadership and decision-making skills
4. improve young people's access to community-based activities that promote community involvement including sport and recreation, cultural and other activities
5. recognise the contribution that young people make to their local communities
6. provide young people with the knowledge and skills to link them with further training and employment opportunities, or improve their educational outcomes.

Program measures that align with the *Youth Opportunities* program objectives are at [Schedule A](#). Successful grant applicants will be required to report on each of these measures.

3.4 Target Group

Young people who are transitioning from childhood to adulthood and from dependence to independence. The program aims to assist in minimising the risk of disengagement for all young people, particularly those who face disadvantage.

4 Application for Funding

Non-government organisations and local government in NSW are invited to apply for a grant of up to \$50,000 to conduct a *Youth Opportunities* project for up to 12 months.

Project funding cannot be extended beyond 2018.

All applicants must complete and submit an online application for funding which is available at www.youth.nsw.gov.au. The website includes downloadable **Application Guidelines** and **Frequently Asked Questions** to aid understanding of the program and application requirements.

4.1 Key Dates

	Date
Applications for funding open	9:00am Monday, 22 May 2017
Applications for funding close	5:00pm Monday, 26 June 2017
Successful applicants announced	October 2017
Contract negotiations	November 2017
Projects to commence	January 2018

4.2 Eligibility Criteria for Applicant Organisations

To be eligible for funding the Organisation must either be an incorporated non-Government not-for-profit organisation or a local government authority.

4.3 Program Exclusions

4.3.1 Funding will **not** be provided to:

- state and federal government agencies
- schools and their P&Cs, universities and TAFE colleges
- individuals
- for-profit organisations
- sub-contractors – either for program management or for project delivery on behalf of non-eligible organisations.

4.3.2 Projects will **not** be eligible for funding if they:

- are currently receiving funding from other NSW and Australian Government funding programs for similar projects
- are run in schools as part of the curriculum or other areas of school responsibility
- include overseas travel, scholarships and/or conference attendance
- provide case-management for young people.

4.3.3 Project funding must **not** be used for:

- costs that are not directly associated with the implementation or delivery of the project

- capital works (e.g. establishing or refurbishing a youth centre) or equipment (e.g. purchasing vehicles)
- administration costs that are not directly associated with achieving the project (e.g. using grants funding towards the running of other programs within the organisation).

4.4 Project Budgets and Use of Funding

A detailed budget is required to be submitted with the grant application. In-kind contributions are also to be identified in the budget.

Project funding can include

- costs associated with implementing the project
- up to 20% of the costs associated with the administration of the project.

5 Funding Agreement

Successful applicants will enter into a Funding Agreement with the Department of Family and Community Services.

Project funding can only be used for the purposes outlined in the Funding Agreement. The Funding Agreement will specify how project funds are to be spent based on the budget provided in the application.

At the completion of the project, any unspent funds are to be returned to the Department of Family and Community Services.

6 Assessing Applications

All applications will undergo an eligibility check as part of the assessment process.

A merit based assessment against the Program criteria will be conducted by Review Panels. The assessment will consider how each eligible application will achieve concrete outcomes against the program measures and value for money.

Recommendations for funding will be made to the Minister responsible for youth. All applicants will receive written advice of assessment outcomes.

7 Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation

Reporting requirements are detailed in the Funding Agreement and include:

- signed Funding Agreement and Project Plan prior to release of funding
- Interim Report, including progress against achievements and outcomes and Financial Statement
- Project Completion Report, including consolidated outcomes, Financial Statement and an Acquittal Statement by Grant Recipient on completion.

A report template will be made available to funded organisations within 4 weeks of the reporting date.

Funded organisations will be required to address progress against each of the program measures; number of young people engaged; number of community activities undertaken; and any other achievements or barriers to implementing the project or achieving the agreed outcomes.

Funded organisations must provide a signed statement of income and expenditure, and an audited financial statement as part of the project acquittal. Note: this may be as part of an organisation’s audited annual financial reports if specifically identified in the process.

Monitoring and Data Collection: funded organisations will be required to report on program measures which link to the *Youth Opportunities* program objectives outlined at 3.3 Aims and Objectives.

Achievement and outcome based reporting may include:

- meeting notes and project records
- project managers reports
- surveys and participant feedback
- media, including promotional material, photos, and or social media.

8 Further Information

For further information on the *Youth Opportunities* program please email questions to youth@facs.nsw.gov.au

9 Application Guidelines

Frequently Asked Questions, Application Question Guide and Help Guide for Applicants are available on the NSW Government Youth website: www.youth.nsw.gov.au

10 Program Measures - Schedule A

Youth Opportunities program measures aligned to the program objectives	
Funded organisations report and provide evidence on:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. number of youth-led and youth-driven community activities initiated through this project 2. how young people have been involved in overcoming barriers to participation; and links to community organisations and services 3. improved communication, teamwork, decision-making and leadership skills and outcomes resulting from this skill development 4. access to community based activities and types of community-based activities in which young people participated 5. young people’s recognition for their contribution to their local communities through this project 6. participants knowledge and skills development has linked them with further training/employment opportunities, or has improved educational outcomes.