



Aged Care Capital Assistance Program Thin Markets, Multiple Streams Grant Opportunity Guidelines (GO6593)

General feedback for applicants

This document summarises some of the common reasons why applicants in this grant opportunity were not successful. It also provides information on areas where less competitive applications could have been strengthened.

Significant competition for funding

This was a highly competitive opportunity, with demand far exceeding the available **\$135 million** in funding. At round close, the Department received:

- 297 applications seeking over **\$1 billion** in funding.

Following an initial review of applications, 70 applications were deemed ineligible or non-compliant or were withdrawn, resulting in a total pool of:

- **227 eligible** applications seeking over **\$700 million** in funding.

Ineligible and non-compliant applications

Some applications were unsuccessful because they were not compliant and could not be considered. For example, those that did not include compulsory information or attachments, or where the application was made under the wrong funding stream (and was not eligible for any alternative funding stream). Similarly, some applications were ineligible because funding was sought for ineligible activities/expenditure under the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

Eligible applications

In determining the value for money for a proposal, the Assessment Committee considered a range of matters, including the relative need/urgency for funding and the level of expected benefits and outcomes the project would deliver relative to the grant funding being sought, along with any applicant contribution (where applicable).

The highly competitive nature of this round did mean, in many cases, that otherwise meritable applications could not be supported within the available funding.

In general, applications were not supported/recommended because the need for the funding was not clear from the evidence and information set out in the application or the need for funding was not as high a priority when compared to other applications.

Some common areas where applications may have been improved is set out below for each of the criteria.

Criterion 1 - Demonstrated Need

Some applications would have been improved by:

- more clearly articulating the need for the proposed project/funding.
 - in particular, clearly describing the current issues and the impact these issues are having on resident outcomes, access to care, quality of care, staffing, viability, the broader community etc.
- more clearly describing how the current infrastructure is contributing to or causing these issues
- providing evidence to support and substantiate statements about the issues, such as photos of the repairs / maintenance / upgrades required or including relevant supportive data
- (for Stream 1 staff accommodation) data and/or details about local housing market conditions and/or rental vacancy rates may have assisted some applications
- being clearer about what works will be undertaken and what will be delivered:
 - where the activity involved expansion, reconfiguration or new building works, relevant site plans and/or concept or architectural drawings may have supported some applications, including clearer 'before' and 'after' descriptions.
- being clearer about the anticipated benefits of the project and who will benefit and how.
- more clearly linking the issues, impacts, proposed solution/s and the expected benefits i.e. telling a more consistent and connected story.
- to assist the Assessment Committee form a view around relative need and urgency, some applications may have benefited from discussing the ramifications if the project did not proceed in the short-term.

Criterion 2 - Management of the Activity

Broadly, the responses for this criterion for many applications were generalised and non-specific, with little to no evidence provided to support applicant statements. This was particularly the case for the following sub-criteria:

How you will complete the activity in a timely, and cost-effective manner.

- Many applicants indicated they had engaged or will engage a Project Manager to oversee the project but did not provide details of the Project Manager and/or their relevant skills and experience. Additional details in this regard may have strengthened some applications.
- Similarly for projects proposed to be managed 'in-house' by the applicant, some applications would have benefited from details of the relevant skills and experience of staff within the applicant organisation to manage such a project.
- In addition, some applications may have benefited from highlighting specific risk management strategies and linking oversight of the project to the applicant's existing organisational governance framework and administration policy and procedures.
 - where a Risk Management Plan was required, some applications may have benefited from better alignment or consistency between the plan and any risks and mitigation strategies identified in the response to this criterion.
- A key issue for many applications were inconsistencies between the detail in the Activity Work Plan, Project Budget and criterion responses, which often did not align, resulting in deliverables and project costs being unclear.

The impact on care recipients and care delivery and how you will manage these impacts.

The Assessment Committee found that this question was often not given sufficient attention and on occasions it was not addressed at all.

- Some applications could have been improved by providing more information about the likely impacts the project could have on care recipients and the delivery of care and how these impacts and risks would be managed. Where these impacts were addressed/discussed, it was often very general and did not address specific issues or the actual works being proposed.

Criterion 3 - Efficient, effective, economical, ethical

Some applications could have been improved by providing more information about how the organisation would ensure funds would be used appropriately, including specific examples of the organisation's approach to project management/oversight, procurement guidelines, financial controls and reporting requirements.

Other areas that some applications could have been strengthened for this criterion include:

- providing details and evidence of how project costings were derived to substantiate your funding request
- clearly describing why you are unable to fund the entirety of the activity and what the likelihood of the project proceeding in the short-term without grant support.
- describing how the project aligns with the 'value with relevant money' principles to ensure it will address the identified need in a cost-effective way
- providing details of whether all required approvals are in place, applied for, or when they are expected to be received, ensuring these details are consistent with the Activity Work Plan
- drawing on the responses to Criterion 2, providing past performance examples (projects delivered) which in terms of value for money had favourable long-term outcomes.